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A theological romance -
intended to advance
Roman Catholic doctrine

JUSTO UCUNDONO,

PRINCE OF JAPAN.

~~~~~  
BY PHILALETHERS.

~~~~~  
[Rev. John E. Blox]
H



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P R E F A C E.

MAN was formed for truth. To enjoy it, is the natural state of his godlike mind: to be imbued with error, is a state of violence. The acquisition of truth, is, of all things created, the first and most important object of man's aspirations, by reason of the magnitude of its results on his final destiny. Truth is that one thing necessary, without which the whole world is of no value to man; and the want of which nothing earthly can supply. For, what good will all the systems of error, which have been broached in the world, from the days of the Serpent, till the hour of Anti-christ, do us, if we have not the truth? All these shall fail us in the end; truth alone will sustain our cause in the courts of earth and heaven. The end of error is death, that of truth is life eternal. Truth, then, every man is compelled to seek, not singly, in virtue of his natural constitution, and on principles of interest; but, by the irresistible impulse of self-preservation.

Now Truth, like its Almighty Author is necessarily one and indivisible. That it may seem manifold is evi-
dnet from the "history of the wanderings of the human

mind." To distinguish, then, the reality from its mere appearance is a task much more difficult than some would have us believe. Thousands, millions, have spent their lives, groping amid shadows, and have died unable to grasp the great reality.

This applies more especially to religious truth. The world, in this phase, stands divided into hundreds of jarring sects, each claiming truth as its especial birthright, whilst reason declares aloud, that it is one, and can, under no supposition, be manifold. There can be only One God, the God of truth, and one truth, the truth of God.

If the Almighty has marked out a road, which he desires man to walk, to reach his appointed end, it is as clear as the noonday sun, that other roads differing therefrom are wrong, essentially wrong; and that, however inviting they may seem, he that treads them must perish, ere he reaches the wished-for goal. The beneficent Creator has indeed bestowed upon us Reason, to direct us through the mazes of error and doubt, inseparable from the human condition, fallen and degraded as it is from its primitive state of innocence. But this faculty cannot make that, which is wrong, right. It may indeed discover to us the proper path, but can never conduct us to our destination by an opposite one. It is very possible for us, moreover, to mistake both guide and road, and, whilst fancying ourselves conducted by reason

into the bright regions of light and truth, to pursue her phantom only into the dark territories of ignorance and error. Many are the clouds that obscure the road, and obstruct the guide. Many are the causes that hinder us from discovering the one, and profiting by the other.

To present a case where uncorrupted reason may have a fair opportunity to conduct man, by her native powers, and God's grace to his appointed end,—is the object of the following pages. It is meant to show, that whenever she properly applies herself to the solution of this great Ethical problem, the invariable result must be, the discovery of God's truth, be it natural or revealed. The outlines of our plan may thus be briefly sketched—Justo Ucundono, a young Japanese Prince, in order that the resources of his mind may be developed, pure and uncontaminated by prejudice, is educated in a secluded valley, Frenoxama, far from the crimes, the errors, and the doubts of men. Knowledge of every human science calculated to give stability and character to thought is imparted to him. From religious instruction of any kind, he is carefully withheld. The name of the Deity, is not so much as mentioned in his presence. This restriction in his course of tuition, was deemed necessary to facilitate and render successful the system of education suggested by Prince Fugurundono, the chief tutor of young Justo, which proposed to keep the mind of the Prince aloof from religious bias, and free from sectarian affection of any

kind, so that his soul, being, as it were, a perfect blank with regard to religious impressions, reason, aided by the grace of God, might have the fairest scope to stamp upon it the image of the true faith, when the proper moment should have arrived.

When the prince had reached the years of maturity, the great truths of Natural and Revealed religion were unfolded before him. The existence of a Supreme being, Creator and Ruler of the Universe; the immortality of the soul; the existence of a future world; the destiny of man; the doctrine of rewards and punishments after death; the obligation of man towards God, in the state of nature, and in the supposition of revelation; the fact of revelation; the Creation and fall of the angels, and of man; his redemption, &c., are minutely discussed, before the Prince and the Emperor of Japan, by a Council of Divines assembled from all parts of the world, and embracing representatives of every known religious sect.

The truths of natural religion, and the fact of Revelation having been established, the advocates of the various systems of the latter, urge their respective claims to Orthodoxy, before the Council. The Jews, Christians, and Mahometans present the strongest arguments. The Prince after deep reflection, decides in favor of the Christian system. Next, the representatives of every shade and variety of Christianity appear,

to contest the palm of superiority. The two great rival systems, whose tenets are, severally, founded on the bases of Authority, and private judgment, are discussed by their champions with great freedom and minuteness. The Bible alone and the Teaching Church are brought forward, front to front, carefully balanced, and are not dismissed until the Bible alone be found wanting. St. Francis Xavier, the renowned Apostle of the Indies and Japan, representing the Cause of Authority, pleads powerfully and convincingly in favor of the great corporation, the Teaching Church. He convinces the mind and affects the heart of Prince Justo, who forthwith decides in favor of Authority, in favor of a Teaching Church, instructing in the name and by the authority of the great infallible God.

To these results, did reason rightly applied lead the Japonian prince, and to similar results will it lead ninety-nine of every hundred sincere inquirers, actuated by a like honesty, and endowed with the same perseverance.

In the execution of our plan, we are aware that we have occasionally drawn upon the kindly aid of friends. This we have scrupled the less to do, having no ambition but to aid the cause of truth unnoticed and unknown. As we are not able, however, to specify when, where, or whose labors we have made use of, we feel admonished of the propriety of here making a

general apology for all cases, and of pleading guilty in advance to avoid litigation.

This little work lays no claim to literary excellence. We have been less attentive to points of style, than to matters of faith. The arguments being chiefly advanced in the form of discourses, there is, in the thoughts and language much of the amplification and occasional redundancy, which in a *written* treatise would be characterized as glaring defects, but which, in a work designed to familiarly expound, cannot well be avoided.

With these remarks, which we have deemed to be necessary, the book is submitted to our friends and the public.

OCTOBER, 1853.

Part First

CHAPTER I.

HISTORY OF ROSALIA.

Rosalia, a Christian virgin, is chosen to become the spouse of the Emperor of Japan.—She hesitates at first, but finally consents, as she is promised the privilege of educating her offspring in the faith of the true God.—The nuptials are celebrated.—The Emperor takes the field, is victorious, returns. Justo Ucundono is born.—Rosalia declines; her death.—The Emperor's grief. Prince Fugurundono. His consoling address to Nobunango... 25

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Justo Ucundono.

PART I.

CHAPTER I.

HISTORY OF ROSALIA.

Rosalia, a Christian virgin, is chosen to become the spouse of the Emperor of Japan. She hesitates at first, but finally consents, as she is promised the privilege of educating her offspring in the faith of the true God. The nuptials are celebrated. The Emperor takes the field; is victorious—returns. Justo Ucundono is born—Rosalia declines—her death. The Emperor's grief. Prince Fugurundono. His condoling address to Nobunango.

AT the period during which the events of our tale are supposed to take place, Japan was governed by a monarch, under whose rule unexampled prosperity was felt in every class throughout the empire. Unlike other rulers of a people, in whose bosoms the sacred fires of Christianity have never been kindled, Nobunango possessed a generous heart, and a mind stored with refined thoughts, almost incompatible with his peculiar position, and religious creed. Al-

ways solicitous for the welfare of his subjects, his character was that of the disinterested patriot, and virtuous sovereign. Notwithstanding the idolatrous worship, and semi-barbarous customs, prevalent throughout his dominions, he looked upon many of the latter, and especially upon Polygamy, with that disgust with which refined taste ever recoils from vulgar and licentious errors. Constituted thus, the affections of his heart, after the happiness of his people had been consulted, could naturally centre themselves on one object only.

Rosalia, relative of a neighboring prince of renown, had been converted to Christianity by a Portuguese Merchant, previous to the advent of St. Francis Xavier. Appreciating instinctively its divine truths, and entering with the ardor of a young and enthusiastic soul, into the sublime emotions which the contemplation of the attributes and teachings of the Deity inspire, she added, moreover, the possession of a well cultivated intellect, and personal attractions of no common order. Accomplishments like these could not allow their possessor to remain long unnoticed. On a visit to the Court, the Emperor was surprised at the extent of her acquirements, and captivated by the graceful modesty of her demeanor. His reflective mind soon perceived that she alone was the best adapted among the ladies of his own

and surrounding Courts, to be the partner of his life ; to share with him the pleasures and pains of dominion, and moreover well calculated to inspire that affection and esteem from all classes, which it was his desire to secure and perpetuate. Regardless of the difference in rank by which she might have been debarred from an alliance with a powerful sovereign, he made a frank and earnest proffer of his hand and heart to the youthful maiden.

Thus, like Esther of old, was Rosalia chosen from thousands of her sex and condition, to become the consort of the greatest of her nation. Yet, to the surprise of her rivals, to the astonishment of all parties, she modestly yet firmly declined the high honor. In this, as may be supposed, she was actuated by purely conscientious motives. To her mind, union with a pagan, however lofty his position, however rare his virtues, necessarily would involve the abandonment of her adopted religion. For this, no earthly power, however unbounded, could compensate her. Preferring the service of God, to the promptings of human affection, she therefore, in courteous terms, signified to Nobunango her resolution, and her reasons for her disinclination to accept his proposal.

Master of the life and death of all Japanese, the latter yet scorned the thought of using his

power and position to the prejudice, and against the inclinations of a helpless and unprotected maiden. He despised the suggestions made him by some of his counsellors, of forcing her to his presence; but in the hope of convincing her mind of the safety, and gaining her heart to consent to his proposal, he sent her the following dispatch: Nobunango to Rosalia:

“Should Princess Rosalia be able to mould her heart to love Nobunango, the laurels of sixty kingdoms are ready to enwreath her brow. Her wishes will be anticipated, her desires, whatever they may be, granted. Her friends will be Nobunango’s friends; and her enemies his enemies. Yet, if her heart refuse the favor, let her again declare it frankly. Nobunango will indeed complain of his hard fate, but will never censure Rosalia’s candor, nor condemn her resolves.”

The conscientious maiden returned this reply: “Great Prince, there is between us an immense chasm, which I fear, not even your own daring soul will attempt to pass. Duty will prevent the union of hearts, which affection proposes to join. Nobunango adores the gods of Japan; Rosalia can only worship the one, true God. Blame her not, gracious prince, for refusing to become the mother of an idolatrous race!”

To this the Emperor answered—"Nobunango does indeed worship the gods of his fathers, from choice and conviction; but he can likewise appreciate the choice of others. Should Rosalia desire to worship other powers, the Emperor will never oppose her wishes, nay, will even yield to her the free control over the training of her offspring."

"Deign, mighty prince," exclaimed the faithful envoy of the princess, "deign to give me a suitable pledge for the fulfilment of this magnanimous offer?"

Nobunango seized the *red pencil*, and in presence of his nobles, wrote the following oath:—"I, Nobunango, swear by the gods of Japan, and my imperial crown, that, if Princess Rosalia consent to become my spouse, I will grant her full freedom to worship such god or gods as she may desire, together with the free and independent direction of the education of her children; and I forbid all Japanians under penalty of my high displeasure, ever to question the religious creed of herself or offspring." This solemn oath was transmitted to the princess. She returned the laconic but acceptable reply: "Great Prince, thou hast conquered. Come and take thy prize!"

By order of the Emperor, the nuptials were proclaimed and celebrated throughout all Japan,

with unusual pomp and ceremony. The rejoicings continued for the space of thirty days. The governors of provinces, the lords of the empire, and the princes of the blood repaired to Jeddo, to congratulate their happy sovereign, and to do him homage in conjunction with their amiable and lovely Empress, who had now become the pride and joy, the hope and expectation of the whole Empire.

Scarcely however were the festive ceremonies happily concluded, when Nobunango was forced to take the field against two rebels of considerable resources, whose machinations had threatened his very throne. In a twelve months' campaign he completely routed their forces, restoring peace to the Empire, and tranquility to society. He entered triumphantly the Japanese Capitol. At its very gates, he received the joyful intelligence that his beloved Rosalia, had in his absence, that very day, given birth to a young prince, and heir to the throne.

It is easier to imagine than to describe the joy which the advent of this little stranger diffused not only throughout the court of the Capital, but over all Japan. He was named Justo Ucundono.

But alas for the instability of human things? This bright and auspicious dawn of gladness and prosperity, was doomed to set amid the gloomy

clouds of sadness and lamentation. Too soon, alas, the house of mirth is changed into the house of mourning!

From the day on which Justo was born, the Empress began to decline. For a while, her youth and vigor struggled with doubtful success against the ravaging encroachments of the disease. At length, however, the violence of the malady prevailed. When she found her end approaching, she sent for the Emperor, whom she thus addressed: "Great and generous prince, my hour has come. My failing strength bids me prepare to meet the last event of my earthly career. O, why can I not live for thee and my guiltless babe? But God is just; he wrongs me not in taking back the life he gave me. 'The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; may his name be blessed forever.' I long to meet the author of my being in his own bright realms of bliss, where the sun of heaven never sets. Fare thee well, my noble Lord, fare thee well! Thy spouse, when dead to earth, shall live for thee in heaven. O, couldst thou but bring thy heart to worship the God of thy Rosalia, with what fond anticipation could she then await thy coming at the gates of Paradise!" And, turning to Justo, who was now presented to her, she continued: "And thou, noble boy, farewell forever, fare thee well! Too soon, art thou doomed to be an

orphan! But thy generous father liveth. His great soul will fill a mother's as well as a father's place." "Nobunango," she exclaimed, "who now shall educate my child in the knowledge of the one true God?" The disconsolate Emperor replied: "Rosalia, be at peace! I bind myself before the immortal gods to perform for thee that holy task. Thy dying request is a sacred command for me and all Japan." He could say no more, but sank senseless into the arms of his dying spouse. Then Rosalia gathering all her strength, feebly uttered, "It is well, I die in peace." "It was the last of earth." Her beautiful head hung like the drooping lily of the vale, and she breathed no more.

When the Emperor recovered, her spirit had winged its flight to the throne above. Again and again did he press her lifeless form to his throbbing heart; again and again did he call on the name of his departed wife; but she answered him not. The grief of the parent communicated itself to the son, and little Justo wept; but his tears comprehended not the cause for which they flowed. Retiring to the interior of the palace, Nobunango gave himself up to the full indulgence of grief, refusing not only the mildest condolence, but even all bodily nourishment. Apprehensions for his life became general amongst his friends. A sorrowful gloom hung heavily on

every brow. His attendants, forcing their way into his presence, refused to leave him, until he would consent to rise, and mitigate his excessive grief. The Emperor at length complied with the wishes of his devoted servants, but he still preferred communion with the dead, rather than with the living. Prince Fugurundono stepped forward to console him.

Fugurundono was a venerable sage, one of the oldest and most trustworthy of the Emperor's household. He spoke to the following effect. "Afflicted Prince, if heartfelt sorrow like thine could summon back the dead, Rosalia would live again. All Japan weeps for the death of thy beloved spouse; but tears can not recall to life the spirit that has fled to the immortal gods. If this affliction were the works of man, thou wouldst be privileged to resent and avenge; but the rulers of the heavens are not accountable for their deeds to the feeble sons of earth. Weep on, thou noble Prince! Give vent to the just emotions of a generous soul, too sorely wounded. Thy bereavement calls for more tears than thou, or all in thy country, can shed; but they cannot reverse thy fate. It is permitted, it is praiseworthy, to weep. It is manly to show that we feel as mortals ought to feel. Yet I must entreat thee, for thy own, and thy people's sake, to moderate this excessive sorrow. Whilst thou art sad, thy friends and servants cannot

be happy. The Gods have taken away their beloved Empress ; oh, spare them, at least, thy own precious life ? Love Rosalia still, ever cherish her memory ; but immoderate sadness cannot benefit the dead, and deeply afflicts the living. If, in the realms of bliss, thy departed spouse can still feel an interest in our concerns here below, and if the lot of mortals can affect disembodied spirits, our sorrows must needs grieve her heart. Rosalia is not dead, but liveth with the gods. Why then lament her as amongst the dead ? Does not Justo live ? Is not he bone of her bone, and flesh of her flesh, and blood of her blood ? May not he take his mother's place in thy affections ? Canst thou behold him without beholding her ? Canst thou love him without loving her ? The purest love shines forth in action. In action then thou must hereafter prove thy love for her. Justo is to be educated in the knowledge of the one true God. This was Rosalia's dying request ; this is thy own solemn oath. Keep it then faithfully. It will be a stronger pledge of thy affection for the memory of thy wife, of thy love of her offspring, and of thy fidelity to the gods, than a life-time of weeping, an ocean of tears, could afford."

Fugurundono succeeded in restoring Nobunango to his wonted calmness of demeanor, and strength of mind. Again he went among his bereft people,

consoling them for their loss, as best he could. But his heart was sad, and his spirits depressed. Rosalia was no more! Day and night her image stood before him. Her memory was constantly in his heart, and her name ever on his lips. Pagan though he was, "he made a covenant with his eyes not to think of another maiden." Justo was committed to the watchful care, and kindly guidance of Prince Fugurundono. No Lord in all Japan was more worthy the sacred trust.

CHAPTER II.

EMBASSIES APPOINTED.

The Emperor, accompanied by his son, visits Meaco, the birthplace of Rosalia. His dream, reminding him of his promise. He convenes his Council. Organization, and departure of embassies to all nations, for information concerning the true God. Their success. Many maintain the plurality, some the unity of God. The chief arguments by which these respective views were supported. Perplexities of the Emperor and his Council. Necessity of revelation perceived.

SIX long years had now elapsed since the death of the lamented Rosalia, during which time Justo had grown a sprightly boy, whose equal all Japan could not produce. He was Nobunango's pride, and the nation's fondest hope. Already he began to fill the gloomy void in his father's heart, created by his mother's early decease.

It happened about this time that the Emperor resolved on visiting, in company with his son, the ancient capital of the empire, the renowned city of Meaco, the birthplace of the deceased Empress. Declining all public demonstration, he was yet unable to restrain the private outpourings of overflowing gratitude. Never was reception more cordial or sincere than that which he and the young prince

met from the grateful and loyal people of Meaco. It was the spontaneous prompting of affectionate hearts; not the cold formality of calculating minds. This well-timed exhibition of loyalty, made a deep impression upon their sovereign, and is even yet gratefully remembered by his successors. The palace was surrounded by a rejoicing multitude till a late hour of the night.

When the Emperor entered the apartment where he had first met his lost Rosalia, the recollections of the past completely overpowered him. At first he abandoned himself to the excesses of uncontrollable anguish; after which, a deep melancholy settled on his mind. All the painful wounds which her death had caused, and which time had now partially healed, were opened anew, and with increasing anguish, forced their way to his heart. On the third day of his sojourn at Meaco, he had the following remarkable dream. It seemed to him, that, surrounded by his nobles, he was enjoying the evening breeze at the twilight, in the royal gardens of Anzuequeana. Justo, seated by the side of a fountain, was playing with his lamb. The Emperor perceived at the distance the figure of a beautiful woman moving lightly through the shade of a verdant grove. He pursued the phantom with eagerness, anxious to discover who it

might be, that at an hour so unseasonable, had thus presumed to intrude upon his solitude. But her swiftness eluded his efforts. The apparition had drawn him aside from the company towards the east of the gardens. On a sudden, Rosalia, his own loved but departed wife, stood before him, with that majestic dignity and condescending mood, with which she was wont to greet him in the days of her youth and joy. Nobunango attempted to clasp her in his arms, but her form, like the shadow, offered no resistance. "Nobunango," said she, "thou canst not touch me with mortal hands, but may'st hear my voice, and thus commune with my spirit. For thee and my son I have come from the realms of bliss. I have come on the part of the God of heaven, to remind thee of the pledge thou gavest thy dying spouse, to have Justo, our child, educated in the knowledge of the Supreme God. Fulfil this oath, and thou wilt have secured the favors of my Sovereign Lord, and the blessings of thy departed wife!" Having spoken thus, she vanished, and the Emperor awoke. With the flight of the phantom his melancholy had ceased. His sorrow was assuaged, and his afflicted brain reposed tranquilly after this unlooked-for consolation. Habitual cheerfulness and elasticity of spirits regained their ascendancy over him. The presence

of the spirit of Rosalia had pervaded his soul with an ineffable and heretofore unknown delight. Resolved forthwith to obey the suggestion of his dream, on the following day he convened an extra council of his ministers and nobles, to consult with them on the proper course to adopt in the fulfilment of his important oath.

The Council having met in obedience to the Emperor's orders, he addressed them in the following terms.—“My Lords, at the couch of my dying spouse, I promised, solemnly, to cause her offspring to be educated in the worship of the Supreme God of heaven. This shall be my first tribute to the memory of Rosalia, as it is my greatest obligation to the gods. But how can this sacred task be fulfilled? Ignorant as I am of the name, as well as of the attributes of this infinite being—a stranger to his laws and precepts, I know not how I may be enabled to serve him, by the direction of my son's religious education. I know not where to find, or how to seek him. It is for you, my lords, in the wisdom of your united suggestions, to devise some plan by which I may be enabled to discharge this important trust.”

“This promise, O Emperor,” observed one of the nobles, “is easy of fulfilment. Xaca is the supreme God of heaven. Cause Justo to be instructed in

his precepts, and acquainted with the manner of worshipping him, and thou wilt have fully complied with the requirements of this most irrefragable bond." "Not so," interrupted another counsellor, "Amida is the chief deity of Japan. The laws and teachings which he ordains are the only ones by which mortals should be governed. This mode of worship is alone worthy the heir of the Japanese Empire." When each of the council had concluded his argument for the excellence of his celestial patron and favorite god—when all had pleaded the special merits, and displayed the beauties and attractions of their particular law, the Jaco, chief of the Bonzas, and supreme pontiff of the empire, rose to address the assembly! He was a man of candid deportment, liberal opinions, and acute perceptions; and was regarded by all as the most learned of the sages of the empire. He said,—“My lords, by what presumption can we venture to palm our own doubtful theories on the minds of others, as the conclusions of infallibility? Neither the systems of Xaca, of Amida, nor the doubtful vagaries of the god Canon, can stand the test of inquiring reason. Who are we, that we should thus attempt to enslave the unimpaired mind of man by our contracted ideas, and confine its action by chaining it down to earthly theories? With me, the investigation of the science

of the gods, and of their decrees, has been the laborious study of fifty years ; and the older I grow, and the more matured become my reflections, the more my judgment condemns the bases of the religious systems by which I am surrounded. And of all the creeds which now obtain in the empire, there is not one whose adoption I would recommend to my young prince on this solemn occasion, But we have heard of other gods besides those of Japan, yet what nation beyond our own, I would ask, know aught of Xaca, Amida, or Canon, of their rank in heaven, or of their authority on earth ? Two great systems divide the religious world ; the one based upon the unity, the other upon the plurality of gods. Among the advocates of the former creed, the Hebrew, the Christian, and the Mahometan stand conspicuous. The supporters of the latter comprise the Japanese, the Chinese, the Indians, and the other nations of the East. Are both systems acceptable to the gods, and suitable for the guidance of men ? or is there but one true doctrine for all, others differing from these being obnoxious to heaven, and injurious to the good of the human race ? Is the road to heaven one and the same, for all the children of the earth, or are there many paths, all leading to the same universal goal ?

These are questions for the solution of which I am utterly unprepared and incompetent.

“Should the Emperor, however, desire to have my views on this all-important subject, I shall advance them with that freedom of speech, and disregard of established usage, which the sublime nature of our meditations seems to demand, which the Emperor has a right to expect, and which my own position and character necessarily require.” “Your remarks,” said Nobunango, “will be listened to with pleasure, and your propositions received with that attention they so well deserve.” “I would suggest then,” continued the Jaco, “the selection and appointment of an embassy of wise Japanians, such as are skilled in the knowledge of divine and human law, to visit the Chinese, the people of India, and of the neighboring borders, and likewise to the Hebrew, the Christian, and the Mahometan countries. Let our wise men consult the sages of those nations concerning their gods, their mode of worship, and every thing connected with the investigation of this mysterious subject. Let them collect the information which may be imparted to them, and fully report the same to the Emperor, and his august council. By comparison of the inferences of their various deliberations, we may be enabled to discover which of the rival deities possesses the highest claim to the

supreme godhead, and consequently which religious creed is the most conformable to reason, and the best adapted to the condition of man. Let the God thus found be the God of Justo, and let the worship of him prevail in Japan !”

This wise and dignified proposal received the most lively attention, and created a powerful impression. It was unanimously adopted by Nobunango and his council, and straightway acted upon. Splendidly equipped embassies, composed of men the most eminent for piety and learning in Japan, were organized and appointed in a manner worthy the extent of the empire, and the national character of its inhabitants. They were sent to thirty of the principal nations of the earth, and furnished with the following instructions, decided upon by the council, subscribed by the Emperor, and stamped with the great seal of the empire.

“The greeting of Nobunango, Emperor of the Japanian Islands, to the mighty nations of the earth ! Receive ye nations my envoys, and let them converse with your sages, that, together, they may solve the following propositions, which we cannot.”

1st. Is a nation free to worship whatever god its inhabitants may choose ?

2nd. Are the gods of heaven many, or is there but one supreme God to be worshipped by all men ?

3rd. If there is but one deity, who is this supreme God of heaven whom all should adore ?

In less than twenty days after the adoption of the plan of the Jaco, all the ambassadors had departed on their novel and interesting mission. The deputations were received by the various nations of the earth, with unusual pomp and ceremony, and every facility was afforded them, for the accomplishment of their objects to their utmost satisfaction. The sovereigns of those countries, which they visited, as well as the divines, philosophers, and learned men thereof, vied with each other in furnishing them all the aid and information calculated to facilitate and expedite their great task. The generous assistance which they every where received, enabled them to accomplish their objects in a comparatively brief space of time.

It was scarcely twenty months after their departure when the last embassy returned to the imperial city. No sooner had the Emperor been advised of their return, laden with intellectual treasures from every country of the globe, than he again convoked his council, for the purpose of receiving the various replies to the momentous inquiries which had been proposed.

On the day appointed it was re-opened with great ceremony by the Emperor himself, surrounded by

his nobles and court. He received the report of each embassy separately. The deepest interest was evinced in the proceedings by the entire city of Jeddo. The chief of each deputation handed to the Emperor a sealed reply to the proposed queries, as believed by the sages of the country which he had visited. These despatches were then publicly opened. The substance of the various replies, was substantially thus. The first question which had been submitted: "Are the gods of heaven many, or is there but one supreme God for all nations"—was answered by the Doctors of the Chinese, the Tartars, the Indians, the Hindoos, in a manner materially the same. It was as follows:

"The gods of heaven are many; the thought of only one God for all the races of men is an unnatural absurdity."

This conclusion they endeavored to sustain by these arguments: "Each region of the earth enjoys its particular climate. The soil of every country yields its peculiar productions. All nations have languages of their own, as they have moreover their generic customs. Upon this universal principle of adaptation of productions to special wants, we think it but natural to suppose that in the gratification of the highest earthly demand, the various necessities of the several nations should entitle them each to a

particular Deity, by whom their interests might be guarded and their prosperity more surely advanced."

"Profound inference," exclaimed one of the princes, "because in India it is hot, and in Tartary cold; because in one region they produce rice, and in the other obtain oranges, therefore each nation must have its own Divinity. Why not demand of kind nature suns and moons of their own?"

The second question propounded: "Is a nation free to worship whatever gods its inhabitants may choose?" was answered by the same nations as thus:

"Every one is bound to worship the gods of his own country for the following reasons. The productions of every clime suit best the people of that clime, and the language and customs of a people are the most useful for those among whom they prevail. So the gods of India are the best adapted to the Indians, and the gods of China are the most convenient for the Chinese. The celestial rulers of Japan should command the adoration of its inhabitants. The introduction of foreign gods into the empire would be an act of treason against the native deities of the land, and, moreover, it would be incompatible with the honor, and derogatory to the dignity of a free and independent people, to search elsewhere, mendicant like, their immortal sovereigns."

Though these ridiculous sophisms did by no means convince, yet they flattered the natural pride of the haughty nobles, who would fain have acted on them. But Prince Fugurundono decided the matter by a simple remark, which had the effect of showing this foolish argument in its really ludicrous colors. "These sapient thinkers," said he, "have come to the sage conclusion, that because we have the misfortune of being saddled on an ass, we are yet bound to ride him; since the mounting a horse would derogate from the dignity of the former animal, and argue disrespect on the part of its rider."

"The third question: "If there is but one Deity, who is this supreme God of heaven whom all should adore?" was not answered with the same unanimity with which the preceding queries had been determined. Each of the Pagan nations claiming this honor for its favorite Deity, not even any two uniting upon the same celestial candidate.

After these replies had been received as the conclusions of the before mentioned races, the council proceeded to the examination of the opinions of the Jewish Sanhedrim, which were expressed as follows:

To the first question, of the existence of the Almighty. "There is but one supreme God, creator and ruler of the universe, and of all peoples and tribes therein."

To the second question, concerning the freedom of worship. "No, this Lord, Creator, and ruler of the universe is to be worshipped by all the nations of the earth, and none beside him. 'I am the Lord thy God, and thou shalt not have strange gods before me.' "

To the third question, regarding the identity of the Deity. "The mighty Jehovah, 'I am who I am,' who appeared to Moses in the burning bush, and descended upon the smoking mountain of Sinai, with the tables of the law. This God has revealed himself at various times to man, manifesting to him his will and pleasure. He has at length given a written law to a particular people, the descendants of the faithful Abraham, whom he had selected as the depository of his promises, and as his organ in the dispensation of his favors to the rest of mankind. But as he is the God of all nations, and since in all creatures his benefits and mercies are to be bestowed, this law of Sinai is merely a temporary code, obligatory on one people only, the children of Israel, and is but preparatory to a more perfect dispensation, which is destined for all men and for all ages! This new law will be proclaimed by the Christ, the great Messiah, whom we await. Till He shall have descended from on high, to proclaim His final pleasure, the law of Sinai is the only authorized exponent of

the will of heaven, the only rule for human guidance, the only standard of human conduct."

"The Jewish doctrine," exclaimed the philosopher Frico, "is the doctrine of reason and common sense. The idea of God suggests to us a being supreme over all other powers, and independent of all things. Less than this he is not God. Let us now suppose that there are two or more gods. These are either dependent on, or independent of each other. If one be dependent on the other, he cannot be God, as the idea of subjection is incompatible with that of the Deity. But, if each be independent of the other, each, not being supreme, cannot be God either. Hence there is, and can be but one God."

"Why not grant," observed the Cubo, "that each god shall be independent of the other, and confine himself to his own province, without interfering with the concerns of the other?" "In that case," replied the philosopher, "there would be no God at all, since none would be supreme, which idea of supremacy, above all others, is inseparable from that of God. Judgment then, and the universal sense of mankind can only sanction the one God, sovereign and Master of all."

This conclusion was further confirmed by the Caliph of Bagdad. To the first question he replied: "In the name, and by the authority of Mohammed,

there is but one God, one paradise, one prophet. God is God, and Mohammed is his Prophet." To the second question he replied: "No, all nations are bound to worship the God of the prophet, and to obey the teaching of the Koran. Under this decree shall all infidels be made to bow their necks, either by persuasion or by the cimitar." To the third question the response of the Caliph was: "There is no God, but the God, adored by the children of the desert, and followers of the prophet, and that God is necessarily one." Then followed the demonstration of this theorem, in which analogous arguments to those employed by Taico, were advanced. It read, "God is essentially omnipotent and free, and a being not comprising in his nature these elements, cannot enter into our idea of an eternal and supreme ruler. Now such a being can be but one. Supposing there be two, then each, being free, can will as he pleases; and by virtue of his sovereignty, can execute what he wills; hence, we have two sources of volition, and two motive agents. If now the one will the creation, the other the non-creation of this world, we have the exercise of two independent powers, supported by their respective means of execution; or we have omnipotence against omnipotence. Which is to prevail? If by any possibility the one, the second loses the divine criterion,

being unable to obtain his desire. If the latter, however, prevail, for the same reason, is the former despoiled of his sovereign attributes. The Universe necessarily must or must not exist, there being in this case no medium. From these facts the Unity of the supreme God of Heaven is evidently perceptible."

After the consideration of the Mahometan solution, the report of the Christian embassy was taken up. It was evident that its reply was awaited by the Council with more than usual anxiety, and that its consideration would be invested with much greater interest, than had been those of any of the foregoing nations. It was well known that the ambassadors of Nobunango had been received by the Christian nations with unusual ceremony, and had been treated by them with the utmost respect and attention. They, above all other nations, seemed to have fully appreciated the importance, and properly estimated the motives, of this unusual mission. Moreover, it was now remembered by many, that it was on the God of the Christians, that their lamented Empress was wont to call.

The answer of the pontiff of the Christians, which was sealed by the ring of the fisherman, read thus. "The successor of the fisherman, to Nobunango, the wise and lenient Monarch of the Japanese Empire—

health and apostolic benediction in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ" — "Illustrious Prince! Your serene ambassadors have handed us your important problems, that we might answer them according to the wise spirit of the Christian law, for the guidance of your imperial mind; now, therefore, see our solutions:

"To your first query—'Are the gods of heaven many, or is there but one Supreme God, to be worshipped by all men?' We believe, and two hundred millions of souls believe with us, in one God, Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth.

"To your second query—'Is a nation free to worship whatever gods its inhabitants may choose? We answer, No,—The God, Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth, in whom we believe, is to be worshipped and adored by all nations on the face of the globe.

"To your third and most important query—'Who is this Supreme God of Heaven whom all should adore?—we reply, That same God, Almighty, in whom we Christians believe, and whom we worship with our whole soul, and our whole mind, and our whole strength; for beside him there is no true god by whom man can be saved."

To this was added.—"This God, Almighty, in whom the Christians believe, is that same God, that formerly appeared to Abraham; that gave his law

to Moses ; that spoke through the prophets ; and that promised his Christ. He is the same who has sent Christ into the world ; who has abrogated the law of Sinai, and substituted a new law, which is intended for, and binding on, all the tribes of the earth. And this law, O, Emperor, is none other than the Christian law, which we obey."

This reply was listened to by the assembly in profound silence, and heard with the highest respect. At the conclusion of its perusal, the Emperor bowed his head, and lowered his sceptre in token of his appreciation of the importance of the opinions of the successor of St. Peter. The reading of the despatch had made a deep impression on the mind of every member present ; yet doubt and perplexity were depicted on their countenances. They had received the reports of thirty of the most civilized nations of the earth, on questions, fraught with unusual interest to every human being ; and not any two of them, could be found, whose views thereon coincided in detail. It is true, that the Hebrews, the Christians, and the Mahometans, agreed with regard to the Unity of the Deity, but they differed widely as to the mode of worshipping him. The remainder of the various nations were divided in their views, not only as to the nature of the Deity, and to a still greater extent, as respected the proper

form of religious homage, but likewise as to his very identity; each of them having peculiar gods of their own. After the inspection of so many conflicting and dissimilar statements, the wisest of the council declined suggesting to the Emperor a word of advice, as to the course he should pursue in the education of Prince Justo.

Nobunango himself, partook of the perplexity which agitated the thoughts of his counsellors. "Immortal gods," he exclaimed, "why have you not revealed to us clearly and distinctly who, what, and how many you are? Can ye delight in perplexing the minds, and in saddening the hearts of mortal creatures? Are the Chinese, the Indians, and our own forefathers right, in assuring us that ye are many? Or must we give credence to the Children of Moses, the disciples of Christ, and the followers of the prophet, when they tell us that you are one, in nature and substance? Speak! immortal gods! Speak in a voice of thunder, that all the children of men may know your decision?"

CHAPTER III.

PLAN OF EDUCATION.

God has at various times revealed himself to man. Speaks to all by the voice of reason. If this be obeyed he will send us other instructors. Impediments to the general practice of truth and virtue. We are free to choose good or evil. First impediment, self-love. Second, example. Third, the force of education. The Emperor's perplexities. Prince Fugurundono proposes a plan, which is adopted and acted upon.

AFTER this irrepressible outburst from Nobunango, the Jaco exclaimed, "Do not, mighty prince, thus censure the gods, for our ignorance and misdeemeanors. The Children of Moses have told you, that their Jehovah has at various times revealed himself to his favored people. The followers of Christ have repeated the same; and both statements have been confirmed by the disciples of Mahomet."

"But why," said Nobunango, "have not the gods communicated their wishes to the Japanese likewise? Are not we, as well as other nations, their children? Why is it, that they seem to have thus overlooked us in the dispensation of their celestial favors?" "How can it be said," returned the Jaco, "that in this respect we have been forgotten by the gods, isolated though we be from the family of nations?"

They have ever spoken to our hearts, and to those of our fathers by the mighty voice of reason. By implanting in our nature, an ever-acting conscience, they have pointed out to us that which is right from that which is wrong,—what may be done, and what should be avoided. Had we hearkened to the voice of conscience, and obeyed the promptings of reason, we would doubtless have been favored with other messengers from the realms above, detailing the special desires of our immortal sovereigns. But, as we have not appreciated, but neglected this first earnest of spiritual happiness, and eternal life, bestowed upon us by the gods, they have, with justice, withheld that more ample revelation, which in the event of our obedience, they had no doubt, purposed. Let us begin at once, to deserve this mark of the divine favor, by walking steadfastly after that light which the gods have kindled in our souls, and a brighter sun will rise to diffuse the glorious rays of celestial truth over our now unenlightened minds. I have examined the records of the messages of the heavenly powers, among various nations, and I must confess, that I have yet to learn the name of that people, to whom the celestial rulers of the universe have not signified their commands at some one period, and in some effectual manner. But, wayward and infatuated, many of them heeded

not these harbingers of their everlasting felicity, and scornfully despised the aid, so generously proffered them. The consequence has been, that those who have obeyed these holy warnings have reaped the fruits of their righteousness in unexampled earthly prosperity, and in the certainty of a never-ending glory, in the regions above, whilst they whose distorted vision induced them to prefer transient and mundane pleasure to a perpetuity of immortal joy, have gathered the harvest of their folly, in an imperfect social structure, in the ignorance of art and science, in the utter apathy to the great ends of their creation."

"Why" observed the Cubo, "have not the gods, seeing men thus rebellious, compelled them to listen to the truth, and obey it?" "Because they despise the homage of slaves," answered the Jaco, "A free and unsolicited service only can be acceptable to them. Man is a being created intelligent and free. Truth and falsehood, good and evil, from which to choose, are set before him. The consequences of his selection are attributable only to his own desire." "How is it possible," interrupted the Emperor, "that rational man beholding the light, should yearn after darkness, and knowing the good, select the evil?"

"Man," replied the Philosopher Taico, "almost

from the hour of his birth, discloses in his nature, the action of two great principles, which may be termed the Rational, and the Animal influences. The former enlightens his brain in the conception of the truth, and discovers to him the path of rectitude, but the latter dissuades him from the fulfilment of its admonitions. The vital essence of the Animal principle is self-love, which, unloosing the passions, in searching its gratification, impels man to seek worldly enjoyments as a means. No sooner has reason displayed the course of justice and propriety, than self-love, finding that it restricts pleasure, and thus opposes its desire, at once rejects its councils, and bids defiance to its restraints. It was from causes like these, that the philosophy of the great Confucius met with such envenomed and permanent opposition in the Chinese Empire. His doctrine proscribed the vices and evil practices prevalent among the mass of the people; hence the perverse Chinese, loth to abandon their habitual crimes, rejected the creed that condemned them, heavenly though it were. Self-love is then the first great impediment towards the observance of truth, and the practice of virtue."

"A still greater obstacle towards their extensive dissemination," said the Cubo, "is the force of example. The desire of imitation is a principle,

deeply seated in the native constitution of man. Children act after their parents, scholars after their masters, and subjects after their rulers. We approve or condemn, adopt or reject, praise or censure, not because we have the authority of common sense as our guide, but simply, because others do in like manner. And the higher the position, and the weightier the character of him, whose actions are copied, the more powerful and effectual becomes his influence over those around him. Thus the moral power which a prince wields over his people is immense, that which the parent exercises over the child is perhaps greater still. It is unquestionably an almost irresistible temptation, and at the same time a very plausible motive, to tread in the footsteps of our fathers, and to follow the traces of our guide. The present fortune of the gods of Japan illustrates this very truth. Why do we at this time see all Japan deserting the temples of Xaca, to frequent those of the god Amida? Because our gracious Sovereign resorts to these latter. Let him and his court patronize the worship of the former deity, and my word for it, all will do so with him, and the now deserted houses of the unpopular god will again become the centre of worship, the temples of fashionable devotion of the Japanese. Thus the omnipotence of the force of example for good or

evil. Unhappy land! where it is the fashion to shun the light, and to wander in the darkness."

"Self-love and example," observed the Jaco, "are undoubtedly powerful opponents of true morality, yet I consider the prejudices of birth, and more especially those of education, to be far more formidable than the action of either of them, or even that of both combined. It is these which shape and fashion the minds and hearts of most men, which mould their thoughts, and direct their conclusions. Survey the globe, and observe how completely they attract its various tribes to their own arbitrary standards. They control our ideas, our language, our dress, our customs and manners, our government, but above all, our religious belief, and mode of divine worship. It is these, which constitute in India, the Hindoo; in Turkey, the Mahometan; in Palestine, the Jew. Had we first breathed in Bagdad, we might have been followers of the prophet; if in Persia, we would probably have been devout worshippers of the sun. And why do we call on Amida for aid and comfort? Because we first beheld the light of day, in the happy Isles of Japan, and because we have been educated in the principles of Frenoxama."

"To these incontrovertible facts," interrupted the historian Mancio, "I have found one remarkable

exception, and but one. I have frequented every region of the earth. I have visited every clime of its surface. I have traversed mountains and dales, and have penetrated into the desert as far as it was possible for man to go. I have been a resident in every country, and wherever I have met with human beings, there have I found worshippers of Jesus, the Christian's God, Jehovah, Mahomet, the Sun, the White Elephant, the grand Lama, have each their exclusive domains, their own specific theatre, where homage is rendered to them, but Jesus is worshipped every where, and the extent of his dominions is bounded only by the ocean."

"The fact you refer to," observed the Jaco, "is indeed a phenomenon in the religious world. No other system of worship has ever succeeded in forming education according to its own standard. With most tribes, however, birth and education have rather shaped and fashioned the religious systems, by which they profess to be regulated."

"Immortal God," ejaculated for a second time the dissatisfied Nobunango. "How shall we at last discover our road to the fountain-head of truth ; how may we pursue through the dreary wilderness of doubt and darkness, the guidance of those beacon stars of light and peace ? How, shall we, blinded by the sands of prejudice and passion, gain the oasis

of spiritual repose, and mental disenthralment? How shall we proceed, impeded by the force of vicious example, and the fierce prejudices of birth and of education? And should the sacred beams of truth ever light upon our hearts, will those hearts, callous and remorseless, throb with an answering pulsation? The Children of Moses, the followers of Christ, the votaries of Mahomet, all profess to walk by the lamp that is shed from the throne of the one true god, and yet they each proceed through a different pathway. How can we unaided and unassisted, hope ever to reach the distant palace of the great king, the dwelling place of the God of truth? O Rosalia, how arduous is the task, which thou didst impose upon thy Nobunango!"

"The task, O Emperor," said Prince Fugurundono, "which your oath imposes is truly a mighty one, but the gods will aid you in its accomplishment. I have conceived a plan for the training of Justo, which, if faithfully carried out, will most certainly produce the wished-for result. If your highness and august council permit, I will submit to them the outlines of my scheme." "Proceed, Fugurundono, proceed," was the outcry from every member. "I propose," continued he, "to have him secluded from all intercourse with men, in some safe and pleasant retreat, until he arrive at the age of twenty-one

years. Let him be confided to the care of a few able and trusty friends, who you know will faithfully execute and abide by your orders. Let him be instructed in every art and science calculated to enlarge the powers of his mind, and strengthen his understanding. (But carefully withhold from him the remotest intimation of the existence of the Deity, of religion, of worship, or of any creed or system with regard to a future world." /

"But why, O prince," observed the Jaco, "do you propose to educate the crown prince without the knowledge of any religion? Even a doubtful creed to me, seems preferable to none at all."

"It is not my wish," returned Fugurundono, "to leave Justo without the possession of religion, but rather to enable him to discover that which is the true one. This plan, which I have been permitted to lay before you, is designed with the intention of preserving his mind free from all prejudice in favor of any religious sect, and his imagination uninfluenced by passion or fancy, and his whole system uncontaminate from the example of others, and unfettered by the restraints of previous education."

"When the prince shall have reached the prescribed age, his mind stored with every variety of useful knowledge, his intellect well disciplined,

and his heart untouched by interest; then let the Emperor convene a council of divines and learned men of every system and sect on the earth. These will unfold to the prince their different systems of religion, and discuss their respective merits before him. The prince, uninfluenced by any, a stranger to all, and partial to none, must necessarily discover the truth, if there still be truth upon the earth."

The plan was unanimously adopted by the council, and cordially approved of by the Emperor. Prince Fugurundono, the author of the system, was charged with its execution; he being, as we have before said, the most experienced and the most trustworthy man in the empire. After this, the council was adjourned.

CHAPTER IV.

VALLEY OF FRENOXAMA.

The Jaco's objections to Fugurundono's plan—they are dissipated.

Mount Frenoxama. Description of the ancient palace—of the thirteen valleys—its inmates. Exercises of the young princes—their studies—amusements—domestic and scholastic discipline—distribution of their time.

ON the day following the adoption of the scheme of Fugurundono, the Jaco, in a private interview with him, said, "Prince, I almost repent my acquiescence in the plan you yesterday proposed." "Why, my lord?" asked Fugurundono. "Because," said the former, "it was given in approval of a system of education which excludes all knowledge of the gods. Since religion is the great standard that regulates and expresses the duties of man to the gods, to himself, and to his fellow man, we should endeavor rather, first of all, to instil its principles into the youthful mind. No human being, much less the future ruler of Japan, should be allowed to reach the age of maturity, unconscious of the moving spring of animate happiness, ignorant of the sublime power of earthly morality."

"Were we now in the enjoyment of the true

religion," answered the Prince, "your sentiments would be just and sagacious. But what system of worship would you purpose unfolding to the young Justo? The Emperor is bound by his vow to have his son educated in the knowledge of the true God, and instructed in his mode of worship. But of the innumerable varying and contradictory sects that obtain amongst mankind, which can be called the true one? It is precisely for the purpose of solving this great problem that my plan has been devised, and in the belief that it might accomplish this end has it been urged and finally adopted."

"But why not at once grant that all creeds of belief are good and lawful, and that any mode of worship prompted by the honest, well meaning heart will be acceptable to the gods?" "In this view of the case you doubtless aim at universal justice," rejoined the sage, "but surely you are too sagacious seriously to entertain such an opinion. Will you place in the same category, the worshippers of the sun, and of the moon, those of the elephant and the ibis, those of Christ and Mahomet, those of the grand Lama, or of Jupiter, with those of the Jehovah? Is there no distinction to be made between the prostitute and the vestal virgin; between those who sacrifice human victims, and those who mercifully protect the life of man? And

such impiety must be extolled, if anything which should be merely sincere is acceptable to the gods."

"You argue convincingly," returned the Jaco; "I have now no more to say. Your system has the full approval of my judgment, as well as that of my heart, and you may ever count on my strenuous and cordial support of your views, as thereby expressed."

Fugurundono now directed his full attention towards the selecting a suitable place of retreat, in which his royal pupil might be reared according to his novel method. He recollected the existence of an ancient palace, of magnificent structure, erected by the Dairi, the ancient emperors of Japan, and which was pleasantly situated on the top of Mount Frenoxama. It was constructed in the form of an oblong octagon, covering most of the surface of the Mount. It was four hundred feet in height, being built of solid marble; the roof, of the same material, being flat. On its surface, it bore a pleasure garden, compared with which the hanging gardens of ancient Babylon would seem insignificant. Groves, and bowers, and refreshing shades, enlivened by a thousand joyous warblers; trees and plants of every kind, flowers of every hue, and fruits of every flavor, covered its entire face. It was watered by four meandering streams, and intersected by various

ponds, in which the rays of the sun shone with glittering refulgence on the crests of numberless fishes. The brooks were nourished by three copious springs bursting from the east, the west, and the south sides of the Mount, and the water was forced into an immense reservoir, placed in the centre of the garden, by means of pipes. The superfluities of the ponds, perpetually supplied by small rivulets from the great reservoir, were discharged in a similar manner. The palace was divided into twenty thousand magnificent apartments, the principal of them communicating with a great staircase, leading to the above-named garden. The mountain of Frenoxama is surrounded by thirteen beautiful valleys, these being bounded by the great lake, in breadth over three miles. Rippling brooks, murmuring rivulets, refreshing fountains covered these valleys, and ridges of hills rising from ten to twenty feet above the level of the plain, almost hidden by the profusion of sweet scented shrubs, together with the moss-clad rocks, gave to them a very picturesque appearance. Every animal and feathered tribe known in the empire was here represented, whilst almost every variety of the piscatory class stocked the adjoining lake, affording plenteous supply to the great city of Meaco, and its environs. The view of these surrounding beauties from the

summit of the palace was exceedingly fine. The silver lake, with its green banks embroidered with nature's hue of green and virgin white,—geese and swans in merry fantasy gliding on its unruffled bosom, imbued the soul with that calm delight which ruder pleasures fail to impart. Flocks and herds are scattered over the pastures, some grazing, others reposing in the shade, whilst the rocks receive the bounding kid, and the hills and vales re-echo the mellow tones of a million jocund songsters, harmonizing with the ceaseless plash of the fountain stream. This valley, fruitful like the garden of Eden, sufficed to maintain over fifty thousand human beings.

It was an abode like this, which Fugurundono selected as the residence of the prince during the years of his minority. One more admirably adapted to facilitate the execution of his system could not have been chosen. Twenty-five young princes of the first families of the Empire, and of the same age as Justo, were selected to be his companions in this delightful seclusion, and to be educated with him in the same manner. Fugurundono now procured thirty-five of the most competent and experienced instructors in every department of art and science, which could be found in the empire.

It was on the first day of May, that the party,

accompanied by fifteen hundred attendants, consisting of the officers, guards, and domestics of the palace, entered the valley. With the exception of the tutors, none were permitted to converse with the princes. Expulsion from the valley was the punishment of the servant who was detected in the slightest intercourse, even in the utterance of a single word, with them. This rigid domestic discipline was justly deemed necessary to enforce the observance of the regulations, demanded by the plan of the intelligent noble.

The exercises of the inmates of the palace of Frenoxama, were, very properly, of two kinds, the physical and the mental. The former embraced gymnastic performances of every description, horsemanship, wrestling and swimming, together with the minor sports of fowling, fishing, &c., all calculated to develop their native constitutions, and by inducing a healthy action of the animal functions, give to the mind corresponding permanence and vigor in the fulfilment of its labors. The other and more legitimate department of education, comprised the study of the languages, ancient and modern, Rhetoric, Mathematics, Astronomy, but more especially Philosophy, a course calculated to discipline and improve the mind. Each branch had its appropriate hour; amusements, no less than

studies being accurately regulated by rule. At sun-rise, all the pupils assembled in the great hall, where in presence of Fugurundono, they recited their various tasks, and received instructions in the different departments of science for the space of three and a half hours. After which, they partook of a frugal morning repast, then devoted themselves to their physical recreations. At three o'clock in the afternoon, they dined in common, where modesty and sobriety were inculcated by word and example. After dinner, an hour was allowed them for promenading in the garden or in the valleys below. The remainder of the day was consumed in the preparation of their tasks for the following morning. They supped at eight o'clock, and retired to rest at nine.

CHAPTER V.

CONVENING OF THE COUNCIL.

Successful result of the peculiar education of Justo. His accomplishments. He grows pensive. His fancy is in search of the first cause of all things. His heart and mind tell him that a something is wanting. The Emperor's arrival in the valleys. He is accompanied by five hundred Divines, representatives of all systems of religious worship. Justo is bewildered. Fugurundono discloses to him the secret of his mysterious life and confinement in the Valley of Frenoxama. Entrance of the Emperor. He meets, recognizes, and is overjoyed at his son.

IN this manner were spent twelve years of Justo's life in the Valleys of Frenoxama. He far excelled his companions in the power and acuteness of his mind, as he surpassed most of them in bodily strength and agility. He had completely mastered every art and science, in which he had been instructed, but for his attainments in philosophical knowledge, and the brilliancy of his logical powers, he stood pre-eminent. His perception was just and clear, and his method of reasoning searching, and conclusive, his deductions being invariably drawn from the spirit of his premises. Every species of sophism, was dissipated before the action of his clear, bright intellect, like the morning mist before the rising sun.

Until the verge of manhood, his disposition had been cheerful, and his temperament ardent and buoyant, but about this period he became thoughtful and serious, to a degree approaching melancholy. He was often discovered alone, buried in deep meditation, surveying the aspect of the heavens, or calmly gazing on the prospect afforded by the beautiful vallies around him. This remarkable change in the demeanor of the Prince was soon perceived by all, though none, with the exception of Fugurundono rightly conjectured its true cause. He was led to suspect this from the nature of the questions, which the former often put to him, questions which he did not feel himself warranted, at that time, in answering.

“Who,” would Justo often say to him, “has sunk that broad beautiful lake around the valleys and elevated Mount Frenoxama to such a height above the level of the plain? Whose arm upholds the stupendous firmament, and maintains these glittering orbs above our heads? I see light springing from darkness, and darkness again absorbing the light. I see the leaf-buds bloom, the flowers fade and die away. Who is he that effects this wonderful change in all animated life? Who sends forth that impetuous breath, before which the proudest tree so lowly bends its length? Whose voice is that

which speaks in the roar of the thunder, and shaking the very mountains, pierces with its essence the mighty oak and towering dome? I see the valleys green, the mountains covered with snow. By whom are these wonderful scenes so picturesquely varied?" "All these phenomena," replied his tutor, "are but the effect of nature's unvarying laws." "But who has created this Almighty nature, and given life to these powerful laws?" returned the Prince.

"Why," said he, on another day, "am I so different from those gay animals who gambol about me? Like the beast who wanders in my path, I am pained by want; but am not like him, made happy by fulness. He is hungry, and he eats; he is thirsty, he drinks, and is contented. But the supply of animal necessities merely, gratifies not me. Surely then I have some demand within me which this valley can not supply? Have I no aspirations, no prospects, no destiny, above those of the brute creation? Why then cannot the luxuries of this delightful abode content my soul, as they do theirs? Why does it soar beyond the limits of Frenoxama in quest of some unknown, mysterious object?"

Fugurundono was much affected by these natural effusions of a heart, yearning with all its aspira-

tions towards the author of its being. "My son," said he, "your thoughts are wise, and your reasoning just; be but calm and patient, for that of which you are now ignorant will be known to you hereafter." A few days afterwards, he again met him, seated on the banks of the lake, and more than usually pensive and melancholy. "Justo, Justo," he exclaimed, "why this downcast air, whence these perturbed looks?" "The longer I live, and the more I reflect, my Lord," answered he, "the greater mystery do I seem to myself, and the more does everything around me partake of the same character of doubt and speculation." How have I come into this earth? Who caused these eyes to see, these ears to hear, this tongue to articulate? Who gives thought to my mind, and who thus makes heavy and sorrowful my heart? Am I to be consigned forever to this mysterious valley, or am I destined to tread on soil still more inexplicable? Why am I guarded with such especial care, and forbidden intercourse with beings like myself? Why, my Lord, are you so cautious and reserved, in satisfying my doubts and queries?" Whilst the Prince was yet speaking, the guns of the castle announced the arrival of a courier from the Emperor to Prince Fugurundono, who forthwith repaired to the hall of

audience to receive the emperor's commands, where the following dispatch was handed him: "Fugurundono:—Eight days after date, the Emperor and his Court, accompanied by five hundred divines and doctors representing every system of religious worship known amongst men, will enter the valleys of Frenoxama, for the purpose of solving, in accordance with your plan, the great problems,—‘Who is God, what mode of adoration is acceptable to him, and what guide we should follow in our pursuit after eternal happiness.’ Prepare my son to meet his father—acquaint him with his history, and with the object of our entrance into the valley?"

Fugurundono lost no time in sending for Justo, to communicate to him Nobunango's pleasure. To the young Prince, the reading of the dispatch seemed a message from another world. A suffusion of ideas occupied his brain to such a degree, that bewildered, he doubted whether what he had seen and heard was not in reality a dream. True God! Divines! Religious Worship! were to him phrases novel and unmeaning. "Who is the Emperor?" he at last exclaimed. "The Emperor," answered his guardian, "is the supreme ruler of the powerful Japanese nation, and this mighty Prince is also your father." "My father," interrupted Justo, "are you not my father?" "No,

my son," rejoined the other, "great Nobunango is your father, and Rosalia your mother." "So my mother is also coming!" inquired the Prince. "Your mother," said Fugurundono, "has returned to the Gods." "Who are the Gods," resumed the Prince, "and where do they dwell?" "They are the authors of Frenoxama and its surrounding wonders," was the reply. "Mysterious, powerful beings," he then exclaimed, "what are their names." "Their names are legion," he was answered. "Who is the Chief of the Gods?" continued he. "The solution of that question," answered Fugurundono, "has occupied the minds of men for six thousand years, and finds them divided to this very day. This question has perplexed your father and his counsellors ever since you were born. And you have been placed in the Valley of Frenoxama for the purpose of being prepared for its solution; and to aid you in this great task, your father is approaching the valley with five hundred learned divines, representatives of all the Gods that bear a name on earth."

"Your history," continued Fugurundono, "is in brief, the following. Your mother, Rosalia, did not worship the gods of the Empire. As she reposed no confidence in their assistance neither did she seek it; and dying, she besought the Empe-

ror to have you instructed in the knowledge and worship of the true God. This he promised to do, by oath. But unacquainted with the true deity, he knew not how to fulfil his pledge. He consulted the wise men of all nations concerning the important subject, but none of them could convince his mind, each pointing a different god and worship, as they were individually predisposed by birth, education, or prejudice. He then agreed to cause you to be educated in such a manner as to exempt you from those influences, which had led these sages to such various and opposite conclusions. Hence you have been educated in total ignorance of the gods and their laws. Being prejudiced in favor of none, you will be prepared to give them all an impartial hearing. The advocates of the various gods and their corresponding systems will plead their cause before you; and, after mature deliberation, you will choose calmly from among the opposing candidates, him whom you conceive to be the true god of heaven."

The whole valley was now resounding with the din of preparation for the reception of the Emperor. Anxious expectation was expressed by the inhabitants, since he had not visited the palace for fifteen years previous. About nine o'clock on the morning of the appointed day, the roaring of

cannon, and the ringing of bells, announced his approach. The imperial colors were displayed from the palace; the brazen gates were thrown open, and the Emperor and his suite entered the Valley of Frenoxama, amidst the joyous sounds of music, and the acclamations of the people. Fugurundono, with the young Princes, had repaired to the great hall to receive the Emperor. They were arranged in a semi-circle in the centre of the apartment. Nobunango entered, and with a glance he singled out his child, though he had not seen him for twelve years. Rushing towards him, and falling on his neck, he exclaimed, "This is my happiest hour since the death of my beloved Rosalia! Justo! thou art indeed her son."

The excitement of the first meeting having subsided, the Emperor conversed familiarly with Prince Fugurundono, his son, and the other princes. He was highly gratified at Justo's appearance, his comeliness, his dignified manners, and above all with his intelligence; and he tendered to Fugurundono his cordial thanks for the able and successful manner in which he had discharged his duty towards his son. He next ordered a sumptuous banquet to be prepared for all the inmates of the valley, to express his approbation of their conduct during the probation of his son. This

was to last for fifteen days, after which further measures were to be adopted for the purpose of prosecuting the great work whose preliminary arrangements were now completed.

CHAPTER VI.

EXISTENCE OF GOD.

The imposing assemblage of Divines. Among them is St. Francis Xavier. The great Council is opened by the Emperor in person—his address. A Jewish Rabbi proves the existence of a Supreme Being, from the existence of the Universe. Illustration from the palace of Frenoxama. Defects in the structure of the world, no argument against the existence of the Creator. The world is, as its author intended it to be, perfect in its kind. God's existence proved further from man's existence—also from the universal opinion of nations. Discomfiture of the Atheist. The Council adjourns.

THE banquet being ended, and the valley having resumed its usual aspect, the Emperor summoned the Divines who had there congregated from all parts of the world, to meet him on the following day in the great hall of the palace. Among this numerous assemblage, there was one, whose history, no less than his personal appearance, attracted special notice. Without prospects of reward, with apparently doubtful chances of success, he had undergone a journey of many thousand miles, threatened with innumerable dangers, to visit a people, with whom he was unacquainted, in order to secure for them the means of eternal salvation by unfolding to them the tenets of a new doctrine. Such disinterestedness astonished

a carnal and heathen people. His demeanor too, meek and humble, his appearance, unostentatiously dignified, his countenance beaming with intelligence and philanthropy, won every heart, and attracted towards him every eye. This was Francis Xavier, the renowned apostle of the Indies and Japan, who had just landed upon the Islands. We shall see him occupying a conspicuous part in the sequel of the proceedings at Frenoxama.

Concerning the others who composed this novel Council, it need only be said that they numbered among them the ablest champions of the many religious sects, into which, the world, as now, was then divided.

At nine o'clock on the appointed morning, the Emperor, Prince Justo, Fugurundono and the court, entered the hall, in which was collected the most imposing assemblage, that had ever been convened in the East. The conclave rose in a body to salute the Prince, receiving him with the highest respect and courtesy. The imperial family and Princes of Japan were conducted to elevated seats, commanding a full view of the assembly.

When all were seated, the Emperor rose and in the following brief words, opened the council, stating the great object for which it had been organized: "Ministers of the Gods, and favorites of Heaven,

We, of this nation, have been taught by our fathers that many gods control the universe, and direct the actions of men. I have gathered you together, to determine if this be the doctrine of truth."

To this, a venerable Jewish Rabbi arose and answered: "By the word God, O Emperor, we understand a being superior to all other objects, animate or inanimate,—the author of all life, and of all being,—the Supreme Ruler of the Universe. Such a power is necessarily but one. No more can the world have two founders, than a child two mothers. The ruler of Japan, according to the established laws of the Empire, must be Supreme and absolute, throughout its territories. Nobunango is that ruler. Now we cannot institute with him an equal in the Empire, since as long as he remain supreme, the intruder would be inferior, and consequently devoid of the necessary authority. But the moment he would become supreme, by the requirements of the law, at that instant would Nobunango cease to be Emperor. Thus, in any case, would Japan, by the spirit of her institutions, have but one sovereign. But supposing that two Princes of equal power ruled this country, it would then have no government at all. The one might order another council to meet, and his associate might condemn his course, and countermand it. Both possessing equal

power, nothing could be effected, which but confirms the former argument. Now, what Nobunango is in the Empire, God is in the universe. And thus the world, like the Japonian Empire, admits of only one Supreme Ruler. When the sun rises or sets, when the seasons return, when light succeeds to darkness, and darkness again to light, it is in obedience to the will of one sole Director, who governs the whole."

"The imaginary being, with the belief of whose unity you seem so deeply impressed," said the Atheist Triphon, "is a mere chimera, an ethic fancy. Neither do the heavens nor the earth need a ruler, such as he of whom you speak."

"Do you maintain," asked the Rabbi, "that the palace of Frenoxama needed no builder?" "No," answered the Atheist, "the contrary is evident." With what consistency then," resumed the former, "do you assert that the magnificent structure of the Universe, required no architect." "Because it always was as it now is," answered Triphon. "What?" rejoined the other, "you a philosopher cannot be serious in the expression of an opinion like this; for, not to mention the comparative youth which the very construction of the world exhibits, in the present state of the arts and sciences, not to speak of the steadfast universal belief that the world had a beginning, the very supposition of its eternity,

alone implies a gross contradiction. If the world be eternal, the earth has passed an infinite number of times around the sun, else you would have her first revolution, and consequently the beginning of the world, at the moment, when it commenced revolving round the sun. But whilst the earth passes around the sun once, the moon, in its turn, passes twelve times around the former ; hence, there would be a less and a greater infinity of revolutions, the absurdity of which a child can perceive. The world therefore, has not always been, but was produced in time. Now if the latter, it either made itself, was made by chance, or by some powerful being, whom we denominate God. If the world made itself, it was and was not at the same time, or it was before it was, an absurdity. Action implies an agent, but the agent of the action which produced the world, is the world itself, therefore it was and it was not, or, as before, it was before it was. It was because it acted, since what is not, cannot act, and yet it was not, because it needed to be produced. If the latter were the case, evidently the former could not have been. But say, that chance produced it. Chance has neither order, design, nor stability, whilst on the other hand nothing could be more regular, nor consistent throughout, than is this magnificent universe, not only as a whole, but as to its various parts.

Not chance therefore, but a wise and powerful architect must have been its author, and this is the Supreme Being, the God of nations whom all should reverence and obey. I would ask you to recall to mind the occurrence of the other day, in this palace, in your very presence. When the master of the palace pointed out to us the grand design, beautiful proportions, and faultless execution of this wonderful structure, did not the Indian philosopher exclaim, 'Show me the architect, I must see and converse with him.' And this was the language of nature.

"Examine now, I pray, this sublime structure of the universe, its broad foundations, gigantic superstructures, star-studded dome. See how light flashes from the womb of darkness, the sun ascends his gorgeous throne, from which as from an everlasting watch-tower, he regulates the days, the years, the hours. The great deep is rolled into its vast and fathomless abysses, and its billows are chained within their prescribed boundaries, traced on the sands. The waters are alive with fishes, the fields and groves swarm with beasts and reptiles, and are resonant with the incessant songs of joyous birds. Its surface is diversified with its fragrant and beautiful gardens, its limpid rivers, and the ever blooming bowers, for the reception of the Lord, not of Japan, but of its entire self. Above it float ten thousand

brilliant worlds, each pursuing its regular course, neither deviating to the right, or the left, nor following each other's track, but following steadfastly the path they have journeyed for ages.

“Who, on thus calmly reviewing this great creation, can refrain from exclaiming with the Indian philosopher, ‘Show me the architect, show me the author of such wisdom, skill, and power?’ If there be no God, I would ask, what force controls the winds and waves, and whose hand guides the reins of those fiery coursers, through the high heavens, yoked in before the cars of the stars?

“Only observe the surface of the planet which we inhabit, a mere point in the universe, and yet having enough to show the existence of a fruitful parent, the great author and source of all. Survey the four kingdoms of the earth, the mineral, the vegetable, the animal, and the intellectual, each abundant in surpassing wonders of innumerable variety. The iron, the gold, the brass, the brilliant diamond, all substances of different nature, each adapted to a particular use. Then, from the lowly shrub, to the lofty oak, who can scan the numberless intermediate families and species of plants, herbs, and trees, of flowers and fruits of varying hue and taste? I need scarcely speak of the millions of living creatures, inhabiting the earth, the air, and

the water, each moving in its particular sphere, and all promptly and cheerfully fulfilling the task allotted them in the morning of nature. The intellectual kingdom lies far above the rest, nearer to the eternal throne. It shapes and fashions, at will, the products of the mineral kingdom, draws its supplies and luxuries from the vegetating domain, commands and directs the functions of all the animal tribes. Its centre is the god-like mind of man, extending its limits over the entire earth, as the sun lords it over the heavens. To its possessor, the flowers offer their sweet incense, the tree presents its fruits, and the animal devotes its young. By his wondrous invention, the night is transformed into day, time and space are overcome to suit his purposes. Even the wind and the waves have been controlled by the exercise of his powerful weapon.

“And yet this same mind, well nigh omnipotent, will frankly acknowledge that it has not the power to produce one single new mineral specimen, one new plant, one new animal, to say nothing of one new intellectual being. It is conscious that it is not of inborn origin, it knows that it was uncreated by any earthly being, but feels that its existence is due to a mightier source, to that same power who placed the sun in the centre of the universe. I now argue, that wherever we find the undoubted effects

of wisdom, design, skill, or power, there a wise, designing, skilful, and powerful author has been at work. Now the universe, either as a whole, or viewed part by part, shows the results of wisdom and power such as no created sagacity and resources could have effected. We are thus referred to an agent, more skilful, more wise, more prudent, than the world can or can have contained, and this agent is none other than the one great and eternal ruler of the universe, the Lord all-mighty whom alone all creatures should reverence and obey."

The Rabbi sat down after having enchained the attention, and excited the applause of the entire body. The Atheist much vexed at the reply, however kept his temper. He became quite verbose in expatiating on the seeming defects and imperfections of the world, from which he labored to infer that it was the work of an imperfect architect, and consequently of none at all.

"You are even now," replied the Rabbi, "giving a sad specimen of the imperfections of which you argue. When we see an intelligent mind wasting its energy, and exhausting its strength, in the denial of its great author, whom it was created to glorify, we behold indeed a spectacle of no ordinary kind. But regarding what you have just advanced, I will say, that the imperfect work, no less than the fault-

less one, demands an author. The human artist does not always produce the best piece of workmanship of which he is capable, but rather, such a one, as may suit the purpose for which it was designed. The world when considered abstractly, may indeed have the semblage of imperfection. But what a different aspect does it assume when we view it in connection with the end for which it was intended. The Creator in its production had in view a fixed design, which is fully accomplished by the world as it is, and moreover in a manner such as a sphere, other than this, could not exemplify. Hence the present world, with all its real or supposed imperfections is the very best that could have been created, with regard to its present purpose. It is therefore perfect in its kind, even with the Atheist Triphon upon its bosom.

“But why,” continued the Rabbi, “should we go outside, for proof of the existence of God, when our own very existence forms its most convincing demonstration. Conscious of our being, we are yet certain that it is not of our creation. Who then has given us life?” “Our progenitors,” answered the Atheist. “I grant it,” resumed the Rabbi, “but the number of our progenitors is necessarily finite, as an infinite number is an absurdity. We must at last arrive at the first of our progenitors, no matter how far back

the genealogical line may lead. From whom did this first of human beings first receive the vital principle? Not from himself assuredly. No more so from chance, which is uncertain, and which never could have imparted to us the functions of sight, of speech, of intelligence. His life then must have emanated from a being, superior to, and independent of his kind, a being who had always been, and who had never needed production. For if such a being were not self-existent, then all those difficulties of which I have just spoken would recur, and with equal force. This native, inborn vitality is the natural characteristic, the fruitful source, whence his other productions emanate, to which his other attributes are to be traced. It alone constitutes him as one before and above all earthly creatures. On it is based his omnipotence, since none other can limit his power. It endows him with unequalled wisdom, since by virtue of his superiority, he discerns the treasured secrets of his handiworks. Unlimited freedom, and immeasurable resources are his prerogatives. To this great cause may be traced the existence of his other attributes."

"The doctrine of the Jewish priest," said Simon the historian, "is the lesson of universal history. History, philosophically speaking, is but the exponent of the professions, the belief, the voice of

nations. From its pages, we learn that the human race, have, universally, ever believed in, and maintained the fact of, the existence of a Supreme being, the ruler of the heavens and the earth, the dictator of the fate of mortals. The prince and the people, the philosopher and the husbandman, the civilized man and the untutored savage, have with one common accord professed this fundamental article of all human creeds. Zoroaster, Manethon, Berossus, Sanchoniathon, Moses, Numa, Plutarch and others, unanimously attest this truth. Their volumes are replete with the words and actions of the gods. Their broken statues, and crumbling temples, buried beneath the rubbish of three thousand years, attest its records. Read the journal of the navigator around the earth; consult the record of the explorer of deserts, and wild inhospitable regions? They will tell you, that they have seen cities without walls, people without laws or civilization; but never have met with beings without a god or gods. How must we account for the fact, that people of different ages and climes, dissimilar in origin, in language, in education, in manners, in interest, should yet be unanimous in their belief in the existence of a god. How, otherwise, than by saying that the father of man has taken especial care to have his name engraved on the hearts, no less than his image on the

outward form of all his children? On this common belief are based the innumerable religious rites and ceremonies which we find prevailing among all nations, and which, moreover, are in fact the very basis on which society and national existence repose. These institutions, founded on piety, whether just or mistaken, have always commanded the respect and occupied the attention of the most celebrated and sagacious lawgivers of ancient and modern times; and have been by them ever regarded as the firmest pillars of order and stability, and as the best safeguards of virtue and public morality.

“Hence, to recapitulate; The heavens and the earth, the voice of our own mysterious being, together with the universal acclamation of mankind, unite in testifying to the existence of this great being, who is, and was, and shall forever be, the powerful creator, the wise ruler, the beneficent father, the special friend of man.”

The atheist, perceiving that the current of feeling as well as the drift of the argument, had set in against his unnatural theory, displayed his judgment in remaining silent, though the vexation of disappointment was perceptible on his brow. The great body of the divines, evidently ill-brooked a system which rendered them the helpless offspring of a blind, senseless fate. To give time, however, to the dif-

ferent members to reflect on the arguments which had been advanced by both parties on the subject in question, the council was adjourned for two full days.

CHAPTER VII.

IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

Prince Justo's emotions at having found the Author of his being. Second meeting of the Council—address of Justo. The great difference between man and the brute—explained by Ximénes—by reason of the difference of their powers and faculties—man progressive—the link stationary—the brute for time—man for eternity. Simplicity and immateriality imply eternal duration. The soul cannot perish from natural or physical causes—will not be annihilated. The attributes of God, no less than the faculties of man forbid it. Immortality proved, by the human desire therefor—by the wish for happiness. The Justice of God requires another state of being to reward virtue and punish vice. Virtue and Vice do not contain in themselves their recompense and punishment.

ON the following day, during the recess of the council, might have been seen throughout the valley, groups of divines, engaged in animated discussions upon the important subject of their deliberations during the preceding day. "O, Prince!" exclaimed Justo, meeting Fugurundono in the garden, "a heavy burthen has been removed from my heart. A thrill of joy pervaded my frame when I heard the venerable Jew so powerfully dilate upon the existence of the Supreme being, whose creations I have so long admired, without being able to discern in them the apparent imprint of their munificent

author. With what fervor and animation did he discourse of the perfections of that great eternal One, who inhabits the heavens above us! How often have I in my own thoughts inquired of these same glorious heavens, 'who is your founder?' and of this broad earth, 'who has begotten you?' But no inward thought answered me. I have in the same manner inquired of the sun, the moon and the planets, 'who has placed you in your respective orbits?' But they, on their errand of duty, passed by, unheeding my question. 'The fields,' said I, 'have not clothed themselves, nor has the lily woven her own beautiful gown.' Yet I know not him who has decked the birds with golden plumage, and fishes with shining pearls. But now, I do know him. Yes, the father of the rainbow is my parent, and him have I vowed, daily, with the rising sun, to worship."

On the third day the council re-assembled. The Jaco, supreme pontiff of Japan, was appointed to preside in the name of the Emperor, who thereafter took his seat among the princes of the Empire. The minutes of the debates of the preceding meeting having been read, the Rabbi arose, and announced himself prepared to answer any undetermined point which might impede the conclusions of any of the members, relative to the existence of the great

sovereign of the universe. But the council by an unanimous burst of approbation, declared itself fully satisfied, by the arguments which had been adduced. Against a decision so enthusiastically manifested, the Atheist had not the courage, much less the weapons, to contend. Prince Justo now arose, and addressed the council as follows: "The physical as well as the moral world in which we live, lead us directly to the knowledge of Him who has created it, and who, by his wise and provident care continues to govern it. We indeed see him not, but we behold his works, we hear his voice, we feel his power, and we repose in the arms of his benevolence, feeling the rest and security of nature, when fostered by his paternal care. There are indeed many things which I would wish to know concerning him, but will not urge them, my self-love directing my thoughts into another channel.

"I find myself surrounded with numberless living beings, moving and acting in different spheres, and each class of them happy and contented in their peculiar fashion. They seem affected as I am by physical pleasures, and by physical evils; sensible of heat and cold, suffering from hunger and thirst. They are fed, and they are satisfied,—they sleep, and they are refreshed,—and so they live on from season to season, from year to year; they grow old

and die, they return to dust, and are heard of no more. The beginning and the end of man is apparently the same as that of the brute creation. Like it, he comes into being, weak, feeble, and helpless,—he grows up amid pains and pleasures,—pursues his course, brilliant or lowly, as the case may be,—he grows feeble,—sickens,—dies,—returns to his mother earth, where seemingly ends with him all actual vestige of his creation. He is, as though he had never been, and death to all appearance confounds the master with the brute, that served him during life. Is this so? Is there no final difference between man and the brute?”

“That the spirit which animates the godlike form of man,” said Ximenes, the Christian philosopher, “differs from, and is widely superior to that vital principle which supports the brute, is evident from the exercise and products of their specific powers and tendencies. Man, by the gigantic powers of his mind, has measured the vast distances of the heavenly spheres; has traced out in advance, the irregular course, for ages, of a thousand erratic orbs, floating through the universe; has acquired for himself a dominion over the expansive ocean; has laid open to gaze the profound mysteries of the earth; cites before him the remote occurrences of past ages, and with authority decides upon the policy

of those actions which these records show ; he shapes and presages the distant future almost at will, nay well nigh approximates its conclusions to fact. Spirits, that have long since departed this mortal sphere, yet live before him, and speak, command, rebuke, applaud, inspire, by their immortal productions, as potently and effectually as though they stood within the range of his ear.

“Nothing of this applies to the brutes. Ignorant of the heavens above, unconscious of the earth beneath, save that which appertains to their vitality, the food and rest, they are to day precisely what they have always been. Their powers, actions, tendencies, and ends are ever the same, unsusceptible of progress, and consequently incapable of improvement. Though many of their proceedings are evincive of tact and ingenuity, these are yet but the result of a common instinct, varying indeed as the one tribe may assimilate to the structure of the most perfect of all animals made. But they have never been, nor can be the suggestions of thought, the promptings of reason.

“The birds build their nests, the foxes have their dens, and the bees construct their inimitable combs now, precisely as they did in the days of Noah and Nimrod. The lion hunts his prey, rears his young, defends his life, at this time, as did the lion cotem-

porary with David and Solomon. He knows nothing of the past, nor troubles himself about the future. He is hungry, he seeks his prey, he is thirsty, and he drinks of the stream ; he is fatigued, and he lays himself down to rest. The brute is for self only, and for the present. Man is connected with the past, passes through the present on his way to the great interminable future. He lives not for self only, but, intimately connected with, is necessarily concerned for, an entire universe. This immeasurable difference of tendency, of power, and of action, between man and the brute, clearly denotes for the former a destiny and final end equally marked, distinct, and superior. The brute is for time alone. Man is for both time and eternity. The soul of the brute, if we call it so, was made only to animate the body in which it resides. The soul of man besides animating the body in this life, has a higher mission to fulfil in the life to come. Hence, when the brute dies, the principle of vitality that sustained his body returns to nought, having no ulterior destiny to fulfil. When man expires, on the contrary his soul enters upon her new, her greatest mission, the continuance of which is everlasting."

"Hence," continued Ximenes, "the human soul is immortal by virtue of its own nature. It is simple and immaterial as all philosophers will admit. Now

simplicity and immateriality imply perpetual duration, as a natural consequence of exemption from all causes of decay. There are but two ways in which a thing may perish: first, by solution of its contexture, or the separation of its parts; secondly, by annihilation. The human soul can not perish in either way. Not by the former, for it has no contexture, being a simple principle. Neither can it be overcome by annihilation. Annihilation is the suspension of the sustaining power by which a being is continued in existence. But no created power can obstruct the influence of the conservative principle by which all things are upheld and sustained. Therefore it is equally beyond this destructive agent, as it is the former. He who created the human soul could, indeed, annihilate it by merely withdrawing his sacred and mysterious influence. That this, however, will not be the case, is guaranteed us by the nature and character of these endowments with which he has gifted the human soul, as well as by the predominating features of his own just and benevolent being.

“That the Almighty Ruler of the heavens takes not delight in destroying, causelessly, that which he has made, we may with propriety presume, much more so, moreover, when his honor and justice condemn such a course. We have seen that the human

soul is altogether exempt from any cause of decay, and adapted by its nature to last forever. Why has the all-wise Creator thus constituted it, if he intended that it should be for time only. The brute, unconnected with the past or the future, suits the present admirably, and it only. His limited faculties and restrained powers point to the earth as his sphere, and to nothing higher. But man, originating with the past, unsatisfied with the limited nature of the enjoyments of the present life, by the force of his innate powers oversteps the boundaries of temporary existence, soaring afar to view the unknown and mysterious regions of futurity. There he fancies to himself the lapse of ages and ages unceasing, passed in the enjoyment of liberty, and made joyous by the society of beings of kindred spirit. Talk to man of annihilation for eternity, and he shrinks back, instinctively horror-struck, and yet indignant. To live forever is the ruling passion of his heart. No earthly influence can uproot or even modify it. It is an essential ingredient of human nature, and which cannot be eradicated therefrom. And so assured is our belief in our immortality, that it has become in our estimation a fixed fact, an undoubted maxim, on which the entire superstructure of our thoughts, even of our lives, is laid. But who is the author of this soul thus constituted? Who has

taught, nay, who has impelled man to yearn so fervidly after immortality? Who, but God himself? Who else has imbued him with this high and ennobling desire, which has led to his present earthly rank and superiority? But, to consider a moment the contingency of the destruction of the soul by its Creator, let us suppose that after a number of years, such a thing should occur, and that he who created this glorious element of human life, should reduce it to its former nothingness, would such conduct comport with a benevolent God, or display his love for his handiwork. It would, indeed, evince cruelty thus to deceive his creature, confident of his protection and assistance, by causing it to aspire with all the powers of its being, to an object which it never could obtain, and which he had never intended to grant. Would any honorable *man* thus presume to treat his fellow man? Can we suppose the great magnanimous ruler of the universe less just, less generous, than poor, feeble man? No; the soul which he has formed after his own image, will be as lasting as himself.

“There is another desire, deeply implanted in the soul, the wish for happiness. It is ardent, irresistible, universal as is the desire for immortality. Its ardor is such, that no failure can dampen, no difficulty oppose it. Every human being is controlled

by its influence. Its aspirations are so unbounded, that earth has nothing which can satiate it. So lofty are its yearnings, that he who has fully gratified his ruling passion has never yet been known on earth. Who has implanted this irrepressible desire for happiness in our breasts? God, who is the author of nature. Then this absorbing feeling of our constitutions must have an object proportionate to its intensity, as a wise Creator could never have implanted it without design. On earth, as I have said, perfect happiness is unattainable. However easy be the gratification of our sincerest wishes, we are yet sensible of the want of an indefinable source of its full enjoyment. Then, since the present life can afford nothing towards its accomplishment, it is necessary that there should be another life, in which the great Creator should ordain that the earthly expectations of man be fully realized. Else, he would never create this faculty of the soul, without a legitimate object, or at most one incapable of fulfilment. An opposite determination would argue unfavorably for his possession of those superhuman virtues with which he is identified.

“Because, if the soul is to terminate her existence with her earthly career, then that goal, which by her nature she is compelled to seek, beyond her reach, is forever lost to her, and she has been

heartlessly deceived by her Creator, who had taught her to contemplate a happiness which she could never enjoy. But, it is not so. The beneficent Author of nature has not acted thus. This implanted thirst for illimitable felicity, will be satiated, after death, in the kingdom of the blessed, where she will quaff from the pure fountain gushing from the throne of God.

“Again, if man must perish like the brute, why has the wise Creator, who never acts without purpose, endowed him with a nature, and implanted within him, faculties so immeasurably above those of other animate beings? Why has he given him that comprehensive mind, those acute reasoning powers, and that keen perception of right and wrong? Wherefore the existence of that sensitive heart; why that strong affection for beings of his own form; and that solicitude which is felt for them, even when beyond the grave? On his memory stand recorded the annals of six thousand years of the past. With a will, whose indomitable purpose spurns danger and death,—with a soul, that overstepping the boundaries of time and space, sallies forth into the age of the future, luxuriating uncontrolled, in regions, beyond the path of the setting sun, beyond the course of the most distant star,—with endowments, glorious like these, he

stands aloof from other objects, the pride and ornament of the universe. Now, is the end of this great being to be like unto that of the sparrow, that falls lifeless from the tree? Where, if this be so, is the wisdom and providence of him that rules the heavens? Ah, doubt it not. He will bid the aspiring spirit, live on, in the bright realms of immortality, whose sun never sets.

“Not only does the wisdom and providence of God consistently require that the human soul should not perish with life, his very justice demands it even more imperiously. If there be a God in heaven, and if that God be just, (and who can doubt it,) he must of necessity, reward virtue and punish vice. But we all know, that vice does not always meet with due punishment in this world, and that virtue does not ever obtain an earthly reward, then the justice of the supreme ruler must necessarily possess a world, where, according to its Spirit, the one may be recompensed, the other adjudged. This latter, opposite to the declared law and Word of God, and always injurious to his creatures, must necessarily displease him. Virtue, on the other hand, being in strict conformity with his wishes, as well as with the spirit of charity towards man, must command his unqualified approval. Now, by virtue of his nature, he is bound to reward the one and punish

the other. Now, here is a case of one, who has spent his life in the commission of acts of wickedness and crime, in outraging his Maker, and in oppressing his fellow-man. He stands condemned before the just tribunal of God, and must suffer punishment according to the laws of unreserved justice. Here is another, whose days have been passed in never-failing fidelity to God, and in accordance with his duty towards his fellow-man,—sacrificing all in behalf of his moral obligations. This one at the bar of eternal justice, is pronounced the faithful servant of God, the compassionate benefactor of man, and is entitled to recompense. God is not only able and willing, but is compelled by his promise to award to each his deserts. And yet, how often have we seen the wicked man prosperous and happy to the latest hour of his mortal existence, at the same time that we have beheld the virtuous man, not only suffering through life, and deeply afflicted on the verge of the grave, but even rendering his pure soul into the keeping of his Maker; seemingly abandoned by God and man. Where now, if there be no other life beyond the grave, are the virtuous to be rewarded, the wicked to be punished? Not here; since both have departed hence. Are then, the decrees of God's eternal justice to remain a dead letter? No. Each

one will receive according to his deserts. The justice of God then clearly demands that there should be another world, another state of existence, where the great Judge of the universe will settle the open and unfinished accounts of all.

“This very same doctrine of the immortality of the soul,” continued the Philosopher Ximenes, “is sustained by the universal assent of mankind. As yet, there has never existed on the earth, a nation of people so barbarous as not to entertain a firm belief in its unchanging and everlasting immateriality. Nay, more, this conviction was with many of them, far more positive than the existence of God. It was to them the great principle on which their hopes and fears for the future were founded. It was the great regulator, not only of their public life, but of their most secret and hidden thoughts. Its eternal duration was as generally admitted as was the existence of reason itself. Moreover, in this belief, there has been no difference between civilized nations, and those that roam wild and uncontrolled through the forest. By all classes has the same creed been professed and maintained alike by Greek and Barbarian; by Jew and Gentile; by the red and by the white man; by the Ethiopian and the inhabitant of the isles.

“But who could have taught this mysterious

doctrine to all the tribes of the earth? If man be no more than a piece of living clay, who has been able to impress this earthly matter with sentiments so exalted and sublime, as is this doctrine of the soul's immortality? Education could not have tutored him, since it varies greatly among the different nations of the earth, whereas this is everywhere the same. Customs, manners, and interest, climes, temperatures, and prejudices, vary with different races, but the belief in the soul's immortality nowhere varies, it is admitted alike in the four quarters of the globe. The author of nature must then have been the originator of this great moral truth, and from him falsehood could not have emanated. Its existence is evidently then as undoubted as that of God himself."

"The reasons you have advanced," said the Jaco, "in support of this great dogma, are well calculated to impress conviction upon the heart. It seems indeed inexplicable how so great a being as the Creator could have wished to impose upon his creature a delusive expectation, by forming an inborn desire, for that boon whose ultimate bestowal he had never contemplated. What satisfaction could he experience in thus deceiving man? Why should he constitute him so ardent in the pursuit of that happiness which earth does not afford, if he had not reserved another

world, where this long sought object could be obtained? Moreover, it is true that a just God should reward virtue and punish vice,—but our ancestors have taught us, and experience would seem to confirm their doctrine, to a certain extent,—that virtue is actually rewarded in this life, by the pleasure arising from the performance of praise-worthy deeds,—and that vice is punished by the never-failing remorse attendant upon the commission of evil actions. This fact then would seem to lessen to the force of your proposition, that the immortality of the soul arises and is necessitated from the justice of God.”

“The delight attendant upon virtue, and the remorse consequent upon vice,” replied the philosopher, “arise not so much from the nature of the deed itself, as from our anticipation of the reward or punishment thereof awaiting us in another world. Why do we experience a solace so exquisite in the performance of an act of goodness? Because we are conscious that there is watching us, one, on high, who records every emotion of the heart, every thought of the mind, with a view to a future recompense or punishment. And why is the memory of evil deeds continually gnawing our repose? Because our conscience is aware that a mysterious hand is writing on the wall, the statement of a debt which must be paid. If there were no future state, this sweetness in virtue, and bitterness in vice, would be reversed,

for many things which are viewed as commendable would be considered as vicious, and many courses which are now deemed vicious would be ranked as virtuous. For, if there be no future world, then the practice of that which best promotes my interests in this life, would be true virtue, and the pursuance of a course opposite thereto would as undoubtedly be vice. It would then be indeed foolishness in me to be just and generous, sober and chaste, since it would cost me some painful sacrifices, which I could have no object in making. To indulge myself in every luxury; to obtain, at any hazard, that which will please my sense and gratify my passions,—would be my proper duty. If there be no other life,—when, where, and how could the virtuous receive the reward of a well-spent life, or the wicked, the punishment due to their crimes? If there be, indeed, no other life, then is the doctrine of Epicurus correct.”

“Where,” exclaimed Prince Justo, “is the sincere and unprejudiced mind that can still doubt the immortal nature of the soul, and where is the heart conscious of its own vitality and yearning, that will not glory in assenting to a belief so creditable, so flattering to human nature? To me, it bears the unmistakeable impress of truth, and I feel honored in thus admitting it.” The council unanimously coincided in his opinion, and adjourned until the following day.

PART II.

CHAPTER VIII.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL.

Third meeting of the Council. End of creation—to manifest the perfections of God. Glory is internal and external—the one cannot be augmented—the other may. An intelligent mind is necessary to glorify God, in his works. Man is the herald of his fame. God to be honored—as after the manner of an earthly prince. Difference between good and evil deeds, determined from their conformity with, or opposition to the nature of God, and his perfections—established by the common consent of humanity. God must approve and commend the good—condemn and prohibit the evil. Man bound to do the former, and to avoid the latter—comprises a compendium of the law of nature. Man has free will. He may yield or refuse obedience to this law. This free-will constitutes the ground of merit and demerit.

THOSE great truths, upon which the Council had just determined, namely, the existence of a God, the eternal vitality of the soul, and the existence of a future world, made a deep impression on the susceptible nature of the prince. “There is a God,” said he, “all-wise, eternal, almighty, — and there are beings gifted with reason and intelligence, whose souls are destined not to perish, since there is another world ready to welcome the spirits of those who have

finished their earthly pilgrimage. Yes, the divine essence within me, by which I am enabled to think, by which I am animated by hope, and depressed by fear, shall live, and act and expand ten thousand ages hence, with vigor undiminished, with powers unimpaired. God is the creator, I am the creature. To him, I owe all that I have. He is the parent, I am the child. He has the right to command, my part is to obey. But how can I be informed of his will and pleasure? Upon that all important subject, the Council must likewise enlighten me."

This body met at the appointed hour. There was a full attendance of Divines, who evinced much anxiety in the day's proceedings, as it had been announced that highly important questions were about to be brought forward. On this morning, moreover, fifteen new divines, in singular costume, representatives of distant nations, took their seats in the assemblage. On the entrance of Nobunango and his court, the investigations were resumed. Justo with a thoughtful aspect, and calm demeanour, rose, and said, "Gentlemen, philosophers, and divines, you have fully convinced me of the existence of the Supreme Being,—you have clearly shown that the great essence of man's nature must survive the grave,—and that there is another world beyond the boundaries of the present, which this immortal part of

man is destined to inhabit after the decay of his mere outward form. You have thrown open to my view new and vast and unexplored regions of thought. At every onward step I take in this new Creation, new mysteries cluster around me. But before advancing further into this unknown Spiritual future, I would wish to learn yet more of the wonderful scenes by which I am surrounded. And first of all, I would inquire, for what great purpose has this world been created, and what particular part has man been destined to act in it?"

"This world was created," said Ximenes, "to manifest the glory of its author, by thus exhibiting his high perfections. And man was destined to be the herald of that glory. The Supreme Being existed from eternity, but was pleased to manifest himself by this act in time, which act is but the offspring of his sovereign will. This almighty decree was suggested by infinite wisdom, which could not act undesignedly, but which proposed an object worthy of itself. Now no object could be worthy of this infinite wisdom, except the Creator himself, or something connected with him,—hence he, or something appertaining to him, must have produced creation, since he alone existed. Such being the case, there are only three motives which can prompt an intelligent being to act,—namely, the desire of profit; the love

of pleasure; the ambition for renown,—now, properly could form no object to a being, himself the possessor of all things. Neither could he be affected by pleasure, since he, omnipotent, is the source of all delight. Glory, then, or renown, must have been the end which the Creator proposed to himself, when he began the great work of creation.”

“How?” observed the philosopher Taico, “has not he enough of glory, who is the possessor of all? Does his fame admit of augmentation any more than his other attributes?”

“Glory,” replied Ximenes, “is twofold, internal and external, or we might say, public approbation and private exultation. The entire being, with all his faculties, powers, and attributes, as he actually is, constitute his inner worth; and from this results his inward glory. And inasmuch as this intrinsic merit becomes known to others, in so much does it tend to his external or public fame. Let me illustrate my statement. My friend has a generous disposition, which prompts him to perform many a noble act in private, for which, unseen by any human eye, he receives no credit. This is internal renown, known only to him and the Supreme ruler of heaven. But finally these generous deeds are discovered and observed by his fellow men, who give publicity to the fact, and his inward happiness becomes public

renown. Still, in both cases, it is the same nature which generates the action, and the same person who performs it.

“In like manner is the glory of God two-fold. The first is internal, such as he is known to himself, the second is external, such as he is known to other beings. The former is essentially infinite, and cannot be augmented. He is what he is, and knows himself perfectly. But other beings whose perceptions are limited, can never be made cognizant of all that is within him, but only of so much as he chooses to manifest to them by his works.

“It is this second kind of glory which the Creator proposed to himself in his outward manifestations. He developed to our reason as much of his high perfections as created intellects could appreciate. By a simple fiat, he produced this splendid universe, with its innumerable and wondrous beauties. It is from this that we derive our idea of his unlimited power. He rules it by just, stable, and equitable laws. Hence our notion of his wonderful providence and wisdom. We see him administer to the wants, and provide for the comfort of every living thing, which impresses us with a belief in his paternal goodness.

“But this exhibition of power, wisdom, and kindness, would have been made to no purpose, unless there were intelligent beings to see and to appre-

ciate it, and give honor where honor was due. Hence the duty, the great end of man, who was created to praise and glorify his God. For he only, of all created beings, could understand and properly rate his great achievement. The universe is indeed a great volume on which stand recorded, the wonderful perfections of the Deity; but the book cannot read itself. A rational mind then is necessary to interpret the language therein written, and to interpret its sentiments to the rest of creation. This is the affair of man. For this, he has been sent into this world. It is the great task of his life, which when done, all is done, when neglected, all is neglected.

“There may be, in the great system of this universe, other worlds, other suns, and moons, and brilliant constellations, hidden from our view. If this be so, there must be other intelligent beings to inhabit, or at least to survey those unexplored creations, else the great architect would have exerted his power, and employed his skill in vain.”

“What you have said seems just and reasonable,” observed the Jaco; “if the Almighty designed to make known his perfections by means of the creation, intelligent beings would be needed to conceive the magnitude, and properly to estimate his power as thereby exhibited. And since man is the only being on

earth, gifted with such appreciative faculties, it is evident that he is charged with the important mission of glorifying the great Creator.

“But you have not told us the manner in which this great mission is to be accomplished.” “The Sovereign of the universe,” replied Ximenes, “is honored after the same manner in which we honor an earthly prince. Natural reason will, in both cases, be our guide and instructor. Here is a great sovereign, who, by his wisdom, his benevolence, and his power, has rendered his people secure, prosperous and happy. They understand and fully appreciate the beneficent exertions of their ruler. A sense of justice and gratitude prompts them to return their acknowledgment of this liberality. Hence they praise his actions, and extol his motives, as far as they are able. They study his will and pleasure, and seek to accomplish his desires. In a similar manner is the Sovereign Lord of the Universe to be honored and obeyed by all his rational creatures, who are indebted to him for their existence and happiness.”

“This is a reasonable and correct view, no doubt,” said the Jaco, “but how am I to ascertain the will and pleasure of this great sovereign? How can I, an inhabitant of the earth, be informed of his wishes, whose abode is in the heavens?”

“The course which he has ordained,” answered Ximenes, “is that you be your own guide and instructor, until he himself shall deign to declare to you his positive commands. By the force of reason, you may discern what is right from what is wrong, and determine those which are good, and those which are evil deeds. The former please—the latter necessarily displease the God of truth. Now, amongst human actions, there are some which impress our judgment as being correct, whilst there are others, which strike us as being evil. On what grounds is this difference based? On the nature and perfections of the Supreme being, as far as we may have ascertained them by human inquiry. Having discovered him to be just, truthful, merciful, benevolent, we class those actions which are of this character as being pleasing to him, and consequently as proper to be enacted; whilst those which cannot be reckoned under this category, are viewed by us as displeasing to him, and consequently as morally pernicious. For example, here is an undutiful son, who insults and disobeys an aged helpless parent, who has given to him life, and who has grown grey in toiling for his welfare. Such a course is revolting to God, to his eternal law and nature, and therefore is discountenanced by human reason. Here is another son, who at the risk of his own life, rescues the old

Anchises from the midst of burning Troy. Such a deed is agreeable to the wishes of the great parent of the universe, and in conformity with his ordinances, and is, consequently, approved by the tribunal of human judgment."

"This dogma of the fundamental nature of good and evil deeds," said Taico, "has been the living faith of the world for six thousand years. — We have never heard of a nation, where fraud, violence, ingratitude, impiety or injustice, were eulogized or rewarded. Nor have we heard of a people, who have ever condemned benevolence, gratitude, reverence, or punished charitable or generous deeds to men. Consult their public and private annals, and amid such an almost chaotic variety of wild, conflicting dogmas, such innumerable, strange and absurd codes of morality,—you will find every where the same notions of right and wrong, the same ideas of honesty and duplicity. Often indeed have men made to themselves abominable gods, but in vain did vice descend from heaven, armed with sacred authority. The moral instinct of man invariably repelled it from the heart. And, whilst passion extolled the lewdness of Jove, reason, robed with modesty, admired the chastity of Xenocrates. The sinless Lucretia worshipped Venus, as the native purity of the old Romans impelled her. Some of the ancient Divini-

ties, indeed, presented examples of every thing wicked and detestable; but the sacred voice of nature, far stronger, than that of the wicked gods, made itself respected and obeyed throughout the earth. There is engraven on our souls, the print of virtue, of justice, and of rectitude, by which standard, despite the influence of cherished maxims, we judge of the virtuous or vicious character of our own actions, or of those of others. Where can be found that people, among whom fraud is a virtue and honesty a crime?

“The difference between good and evil then, resulting as actions are in conformity with or opposed to the spirit of the Divine nature,—God must necessarily in vindication of his own attributes, approve and encourage virtuous deeds, and condemn and punish wicked ones. And we, as rational beings, having ascertained those actions which are contrary to the Divine nature, are bound to avoid them, as we are obliged to practice those which we find conformable to the law of God. Again, as order is a prominent attribute of the Deity, he must necessarily enforce it in his commands to his earthly creatures. Now order requires that every being should act according to the faculties which it has received from its celestial author. He having bestowed reason upon man, demands of him, that he shall be guided

by its dictates. But reason prompts man to do good and to avoid evil, and this authority emanating from the Great Ruler, whose province is to command, and whose wish is to benefit man, (which can be accomplished but in this manner) requires man to perform the one, and to shun the other. Here, then, is a compendium of the natural moral law, embraced in these few words: "Do good and avoid evil."

"But how," observed the Atheist Triphon, can man be bound to do good and to avoid evil, being, as he is, a mere creature of circumstances, easily wrought upon by external causes, and by no means master of his own actions?"

"That the moral freedom of man is no chimera, but a demonstrable reality," replied the philosopher Taico, "is so evident to most men, that it seems strange that it should ever have been questioned. After quietly listening to all that philosophers can adduce against my conviction of the freedom of thought and action, I am as thoroughly persuaded, (as though they had not argued), that I am, at that very moment, free to rise or remain sitting, to read or to write, to think of matters abroad, or of those at home; to pray to God, and keep his commandments, or to transgress them by yielding to the devil, the world, and the flesh; and no reasoning, however cogent, could convince me of the contrary.

Physical force may indeed overcome the body, but cannot control the mind. And should even the body suffer violence, the soul within it is as free as the air it breathes. It condemns or approves, censures or praises, at will. Why do we make promises to our fellow-man, years previous to their fulfilment? Is it not because we are inwardly persuaded that we will be free to realize those promises, whenever we may deem it proper! There are indeed several requisites needed to enable us to exercise this divine faculty. We must have objects from which to select, we also must in the selection be influenced by some motive. But these are only simple conditions of action, and do not determine, as they do not impede, our will. Should a hundred considerations induce me to a particular course of action, I am nevertheless free to adopt a line of conduct precisely opposite thereto; and, of this privilege I am always well conscious. It is true, that to some extent, we are compelled to seek happiness, since to wish evil for the sake of evil, we are scarcely at liberty. But this, again, is but a circumstance attending the exercise of free will, since we may choose the evil for other reasons. We may moreover seek happiness in any manner we please; we may even seek it in evil itself. We need a motive,—our simple wish is in this sense, sufficient for any action. ‘I have done

so, because I chose,' is the final motive of every deed. This free will, which all experience within themselves, is the ground upon which rests merit and demerit in man; the principle by which is regulated the distribution of rewards and punishments in this or in a future world. For no one should be held accountable for actions beyond his power to control."

"That we are free to do good or evil," said Prince Fugurundono, "we are all conscious. The former, besides being agreeable to ourselves, is no less conformable to the wishes of the Supreme Being. That He must approve it, and condemn that which conflicts with it, is equally evident. Yet it will forever remain true, that man often neglects that which he approves, and adopts that which he condemns. What means then has the great lawgiver adopted to enforce the natural law?"

CHAPTER IX.

ETERNAL REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS.

There are rewards and punishments after death in order to enforce upon earth the tenets of the natural law—They must be sufficient to persuade the will, without compelling it—There are none such in this life—Then must there be in the next—No rewards worthy of virtue, except those which are eternal—Then must the punishment of vice be everlasting—The wicked soul is as immortal as the just one—It obtains no recompense—It then must be visited with retribution—No rewards sufficient to ensure the observance of the law of nature, except those which are eternal—It becomes God to reward the good, and to punish the evil—Evil propensities are not inherent, but a corruption of liberal feelings—We have reason by which to control them—Our evil inclinations must be repressed and overcome, otherwise would society be subverted—We should endeavor to follow good—Annihilation not a sufficient punishment for crime—Conclusion of Ximenes' argument.

“THE eternal lawgiver,” answered Ximenes, “like all human legislators, has thought proper to secure the observance of his commands by means of rewards and punishments. The law of nature is more universal and more important than all human laws, because in it is involved the dearest interest of every man, on it depends the chief happiness of mankind. Its observance then being of greater importance, is more imperatively demanded than that of any other law or system of laws. But all

human lawgivers have made provision to secure the enactment of their decrees, by instituting the distribution of rewards and punishments. On much more imperative grounds than is the eternal lawgiver bound to secure obedience from his creatures by similar means. Again, his own honor, no less than the interest of his people, demands that the law of nature receive this universal homage. But this result can be obtained in no other manner than by proper inducements, none of which are more powerful than those I have just named. It were surely highly discreditable to the nature and attributes of the Supreme Being were he unable to attain those ends which he had proposed to himself in the creation of this very law. Moreover, rewards and punishments are imperatively demanded by the spirit of this law itself, on which is hinged the weal or woe of of mankind.

“And these rewards and punishments must be of a certain kind. They should be sufficiently powerful to persuade the will, without being arbitrary enough to compel it, else they would destroy human liberty. To effect desirably the result, they should be of a nature at once earnest and characteristic. Man is a creature frail and wayward, his passions are violent, his temptations multifarious; his reasoning powers are uncertain in their action, often clouded and way-

ward. Unmindful of the admonitions of justice, none but motives the most persuasive, incentives the most irresistible can secure his affections or his allegiance to the mandates of the Divine will.

“Now, I maintain that earth affords no rewards, of sufficient value, to recompense the observer of these laws, nor can it inflict punishments sufficiently terrific and retributive to form an adequate chastisement for the transgressor. All the good or evil which by any possible chance may fall to the lot of any man in the present life, is far below that which even reason demands, in order to secure a proper obedience to the Divine will. Moreover, in this life, it is not always the observers of this law who are rewarded: nor the transgressors who are punished. Good and evil is distributed among the righteous and the sinful indiscriminately. And if there be any distinction in the visitation, it is not unfrequently in favor of the latter. From this it is evident that the mundane career of man is not the sphere in which his deserts are to be acknowledged, or his vices denounced.”

“Admitting this,” said Triphon, “what follows?” “Simply this,” replied Ximenes. “The great law-giver has in another world determined rewards and punishments of a very different kind from those which man can devise. In order that they be

efficacious in the accomplishment of their design, they must necessarily be eternal. I am an immortal being, hence my recompense should be immortal. Supposing that I may enjoy my reward but for a time, upon its expiration, what am I to expect. Any gift, however rare, would cease to be such, if connected with the apprehension of losing it. And the greater the good conferred upon me, the more painful would become the thought of being obliged to part with it.

“Again he who rewards virtue, is the bounteous Lord of the universe. Any recompense which he bestows must necessarily be in keeping with his majesty and superior attributes. Now, can any blessing emanating from him, other than an eternal one, be considered as such? Emphatically, no. How very ungodlike would that great Being render himself, did he allow his donations to be circumscribed by the bonds of time? In what light would not his creatures estimate that celestial benevolence, which after bestowing upon his creature a few years of happiness would suddenly withdraw the hand of remuneration, and again plunge him in his former distress and misery, and that too after having moreover himself implanted within this creature’s heart the irrepressible yearning after illimitable and never-ending felicity? Would conduct like this comport

with even a man, of ordinary impulses of gratitude and benevolence? Moreover, if man has served his God with all the powers of his mind, and all the affections of his heart during his earthly career, is he not fairly entitled to a recompense commensurate with his refined perceptions and enlightened faculties? Now the attributes of man not only qualify him for eternal happiness, but by the very constitution of his nature, a less reward would be unsatisfactory to, and irreconcilable with his thoughts, his feelings, his deeply seated aspirations. And the just God of nature is in reason bound to furnish that to which his subject may justly lay claim. The rewards of virtue, then, are necessarily unchangeable, irrevocable, and eternal—by reason of the nature of man, and in accordance with the attributes of the Deity.

But if the reward of virtue be everlasting, why should not the punishment of vice be likewise so? Is the soul of the wicked one, of a different nature, of a less durable construction than that of the just man? Immortality is common to both. For everlasting weal or woe must they then be destined. The soul of the wicked can assuredly lay claim to no recompense, and therefore cannot obtain it. It must then be miserable, since existence without happiness is misery. Besides it must necessarily be

the prey of deep regret, bitter anguish, irretrievable despair; of regret, for the happiness forever lost to it by its own folly; of anguish, at its present unhappy condition; of despair, by the consciousness of being unable ever to repair the faults of the past, or by any possibility to change its situation for a less unhappy fate. Would not thoughts like these apart from positive punishment, constitute a hell sufficiently terrible? It is the circumstance of the eternal duration of our being which renders rewards and punishments, a means so efficacious in enforcing the observance of the Divine commands. Decree any punishment, however severe, against the transgressors of this law,—but leave a hope that it will finally terminate,—and its great moral power in deterring men from the commission of vice, is destroyed. But, on the other hand, institute a reckoning sufficiently trivial, and add to it the dreadful circumstance of its perpetual duration,—and at once it acts as a never failing check upon the actions of men, a powerful restraint on vice, a ready incentive to virtue. Hence I maintain that nought but eternal rewards and punishments can constitute motives sufficiently strong to induce men, under existing circumstances, generally, to comply with the precepts of the law of nature. But if by the nature of man's earthly constitution these are

required, a wise and just creator must have established them, and consequently, their character must be eternal."

"Is it not unworthy so exalted a being," observed Triphon, "to descend so low as to become a spy upon human actions? What matter can it be to him, whether we, trivial creatures act properly or improperly here below? Can insignificant worms of the earth, who quake before the majesty of his look, merit the attention of heaven's glorious king?"

"Is it not derogatory to his exalted majesty, to take upon himself an office so undignified, as that of exercising a censorship over the every-day actions of man?"

"Much more lowly, if so," answered Ximenes, "is the conduct of man, in his endeavors to degrade the character of his Maker, by reducing the Divine perfections to the level of his own grovelling mind; by estimating the splendor of his attributes, by comparison with a human standard. God is not like man; nor are his conceptions and acts, like the thoughts and efforts of men. He need not descend from his high estate to inspect our conduct. Not only our words and deeds, but the most secret thoughts of our souls lie open to his all-seeing eye. With a single glance, he inspects every corner of the extended universe, and reads the deeds of all

mankind, as they have occurred, as they are acting, as they will be. No exertions then are requisite on the part of God, to ascertain the thoughts and doings of men. In virtue of his infinitely perfect nature and attributes, he necessarily knows and sees all that may occur. And as the nature of these acts demands, with the same ease does he decree the meed of praise, or the retribution of vice.

“Again, if it became the Supreme Ruler to create man, it is but natural to suppose that it would likewise behoove him to take proper care of him. His law involves and comprises the chief, the greatest interest of man, hence the creator should enforce the observance of its precepts, for the very purpose of benefitting those over whom he is to preside, and whose welfare he feels bound to promote. But this obedience cannot be secured without decreeing chastisements for the transgressor, and recompense for the observer of the law.”

“Why, at least,” said Triphon, “should a just God inflict punishment upon man for the exercise of those passions and evil propensities, which have, despite his will, been imposed upon him, and which he is compelled to retain? Can it be wrong to obey the promptings of that influence which the Author of our nature has implanted within our breasts?”

“To have inclinations and desires, however violent

or wicked," returned Ximenes, "is not offensive to the Deity, and can therefore form no proper subject for punishment. It is our free and deliberate acquiescence in, and indulgence of these passions, which constitutes crime, and this disposition of them is always under the option of our own wishes. We have the power of yielding to, or resisting temptation. Besides, these propensities and desires are not the gift of the Creator, but the consequences of man's deliberate transgression. We came forth from his hands, pure, holy, and spotless. Our own disobedience, and the abuse of our natural generous impulses have made us what we are, when subject to passion, and capable of sin. In yielding to the passions then, we do not make use of the gift of God, but are infected with the corruption of sin. And what would become of the world and of our race, should men exchange passion for judgment, and adopt desire as the rule of their actions. Then would the immutable principles of justice indeed be changed, right confounded with wrong, every security of life, liberty and fortune destroyed. The will of the strongest would then be the only recognized law. I need but covet my neighbor's goods to have a title to the same. And should he dare to interpose between me and the gratification of my wishes, his very life would perhaps be sacrificed.

Did I dislike a father's rule, or long for his fortune, poison, or the dagger, would be lawful means to accomplish my end, and to secure these, my natural rights. It is evident, that the welfare of society, and the individual security of man demand that our conduct be regulated by other monitors than those of passion or unrestrained desire.

“The impulses of uncultivated or deteriorated nature, are indeed powerful agents of evil, yet we have within us a conservative principle by which they may be controlled and subdued. Amid the wildest and most chaotic play of the passions, the admonishing voice of reason is heard, and its firm and solemn tones speak to the soul of the helpless and maddened being, in a voice, whose spirit is, ‘thus far shalt thou go, but no farther.’ It inculcates upon the mind of man that nothing is more foolish and impolitic than to yield to the first cravings of desire. All those human laws which the experience of ages has recommended, lay down as a fixed principle, that the evil propensities of our nature must at all hazards be repressed. Such is, moreover, the universal voice of rational nature. And those men, who in any age have been lauded as heroes, have been distinguished for their triumphs over native brutality, whereas those who have blindly yielded to the excesses of their passions,

have merited, and justly received the execration of all mankind.

“But our propensities are not all of the evil kind. We find within us virtuous and honorable sentiments. If the desires of the flesh would fain level us with the brute, does not the voice of the spiritual law elevate us to the sphere of angelic nature? Why do you decide in favor of evil, by calling wicked propensities natural? Can you find no reason for designating your virtuous inclinations by that honorable appellation? ‘But,’ you reply, ‘my evil desires are the strongest and most irrepressible.’ But this very violence of their action, is an evident proof that they are not natural, but a perversion and abuse of those sympathies and generous impulses, which, in the dawn of creation, the Almighty bestowed upon us. And despite those violent passions which occupy at times the heart of man, reason yet rules supremely in the moral world, as does the sun in the physical creation.

“It is impious then, to charge on the author of our being crimes, resulting from our own wilful transgressions. It is unjust and ungenerous to hold him responsible for our corrupted tastes, and vitiated minds. Before us he has placed good and evil, and bestows upon us the full freedom to choose as we may. Having declared to us his will and pleasure,

and apprised us of the consequences of disobeying it, to our own folly must we attribute the retribution which overtakes us if we obstinately persist in our evil conduct."

"At least," said Triphon, "the Almighty's anger should be appeased by a total destruction of the criminal object of his justice. What pleasure can he derive from the spectacle of a poor soul eternally miserable by the act of its Creator? Let him reward his friend with bliss eternal; whilst reducing his enemies to that nought from which he called them forth! Surely annihilation is a punishment sufficiently terrible to satisfy the demands of his injured honor,—sufficiently effective to atone for past misdemeanor."

"Like those of the faithful," replied Ximenes, "the souls of the wicked partake of the character of immortality. To utterly destroy them, requires then the intervention of infinite power. Why should the Almighty, however, enact a miracle in order to deprive them of a life, which, by their own actions, they have rendered intolerable to themselves? Why should they, who, even with their dying breath insulted him, merit such a boon? Annihilation would indeed be a welcome visitation to those, having nought but misery to expect from a protracted existence. Threaten the impious man with

this species of mitigated punishment, and you will discover, that after being conscious of the retribution which awaits his guilt, with his whole feeling he will desire it. And the more you succeed in persuading him that his whole being will finally cease to be, and that his end will be like unto that of the brute, the more recklessly will he pursue his career of wickedness and crime. And candidly, what is there in the thought of annihilation, calculated to give rise to serious uneasiness or regret in the mind of the impious man? He is to be separated from his God? But what to him is the loss of a God, whom he has never known, whom he has never loved, and who will manifest neither mercy nor kindness towards him in the world to come? He is to be withdrawn from kindred beings, never more to enjoy the society of those with whom he has been associated! But he was connected with them only by means of the unnatural bonds of crime, which death must sever. Can he regret the loss of present pleasures and enjoyments? These must necessarily terminate with life. Shall he dread forever to close his eyes upon the bright regions of present life? Of what solace can existence be to him who lives, hated by his fellow-man, disgusted with himself, and despised by his God? Evidently annihilation would be to him the most desirable termination of a wicked

life. But in this wish, eternal justice cannot indulge the criminal. He must forever live on in unending torments for his voluntary transgressions."

"Eternal rewards and unending punishments are then being prepared in the world to come, for every human being who has breathed the air of life. No recompense for virtuous deeds is worthy of the infinite bounty of God, unless it be as lasting as the spirit on whom it is to be conferred. And none other could realize the expectations of the immortal soul. Eternal chastisements must likewise be inflicted upon the wicked, and they too must live as long as God is God. But life without rewards, is existence in torment, and this will be their portion, without the possibility of revocation. God is just, He rewards the intention equally as the deed. Were the wicked prolonged on the earth, they would continue to offend their God. Death does indeed terminate their crimes, but not their sinful desires. These accompany their souls even to the judgment seat of God. It is meet then, that they too receive their due desert at the hands of eternal justice."

"Great God!" exclaimed Nobunango, "how dreadful is thy justice! Wilt thou also visit with thy eternal chastisement the spirit of our departed forefathers, who have not, in ages past, obeyed thy law, because they knew it not? Why hast thou

withheld from us for so many ages, knowledge of the terrors of thy judgments? O, deceased princes! O, illustrious heroes of Japan, where now sojourn your immortal spirits? What is your position among the innumerable dead? Repose you in sorrow or in peace?"

"God is just," observed Jaco, "he will do wrong to none. Let us not interfere with his judgments. The light of reason shone before the vision of our ancestors no less than before ours. And the charitable voice of nature informed their hearts concerning the right and the wrong. Have they followed that light, and hearkened unto that voice? Then are their spirits in peace. For the Omniscient Ruler of all is incapable of aught but honor, justice, and truth."

Justo Ucundono was deeply affected by his father's remarks, since more than once they had occurred to himself during the discussion which had just terminated. The persuasive and conclusive remarks of Ximenes, together with his impressive and eloquent manner in enforcing them, had diffused throughout the council a solemn mood of reverential feeling. His address having concluded, they adjourned until the following day.

CHAPTER X.

REVELATION.

The World a temple erected to the honor of the Deity. Man is its high priest. Serving his maker by his faculties. This is his natural worship, which he may offer unto him until a positive method shall have been prescribed. Example from the case of the Japanese Emperor. God has revealed his will. Revelation not only practicable, but highly consonant with the character of the Supreme Being. He may reveal mysteries unto us. These we are bound to believe. Mysteries not inconsistent with reason. Revelation necessary in the present state of the world. Human reason insufficient to guide man into the path of duty. Proved by the crimes extant among the Gentile world, and even countenanced by their philosophers. If revelation be necessary to the fulfilment of our destiny, then has it been made.

THE council having entered upon its fourth session, Justo Ucundono arose to thank the Philosopher Ximenes for the lucid manner in which, on the previous day, he had explained to the Council the object of this visible creation, and the special part therein assigned to man. "We are impelled," said he, "to admire the wonderful economy of God, who has erected the magnificent temple of the universe for his own glory, and who has placed therein man to minister unto him as the great high priest of the rest of creation. Man alone is empowered to enter the awful sanctuary, and to stand erect in the pre-

sence of the Deity, communing with him face to face. His reason informs him of that clean oblation, which is acceptable to God, according to the ordinances of the law of nature. It induces him, moreover, to reject those abominable sacrifices, which are repugnant to the wishes of a great being. In this consecrated temple, may I worship him daily with all the powers of my mind, with all the affections of my soul. Memory offers its homage by recounting the many wonders which he has wrought for the benefit of man ;—the understanding, by its admiration and laudation of his power, wisdom, and benevolence ;—the will, by the performance of virtuous deeds, and the avoidance of evil ;—the heart, by sincerely loving and adoring him for his liberality and beneficence in bestowing upon me life, liberty, with all their attendant blessings. Ungrateful indeed must be that man, insensible of any feeling of honor or gratitude, who can enter this temple without prostrating himself, in humble and spontaneous adoration before that great Deity, who is its proprietor.”

“ You have formed, O Prince,” exclaimed Ximenes, “ a true conception of the character of the law of nature, and of the homage due to God, on the part of man, according to its ordinances. No principles can be more simple and truthful than the

grounds of natural religion. God is the beneficent Creator, the all-wise ruler, the powerful protector, the generous benefactor. Man is the befriended being, the recipient of abundance, the free intelligent creature, the one in every way provided for by his heavenly parent. What more just and equitable principles can there be than those emanating from such sources? They must breathe the spirit of love, obedience, gratitude, and reverence, towards so exalted and matchless a being. Hence arise the elements and the essence of natural religion, which is binding on all men."

"The Almighty does not stand in need of our homage, and it being unworthy of him, he naturally cannot exact it," observed Triphon.

"In virtue of the relation existing between them, the Almighty must require of his creatures all, that order, propriety and justice would necessarily prompt," replied Ximenes. "These sentiments," he continued, "necessarily demand gratitude on the part of man for benefits conferred upon him. It is this high toned acknowledgment of our dependence which constitutes worship. Nor is this tribute unworthy the great Creator. It is employing in his service, his own gifts. If it became him to confer them upon us, why should it not be worthy of him to be served by them? He indeed needs

not our service, but we need a recompence from him, which is only to be obtained by means thereof."

"Love, honor, gratitude and obedience then," resumed Triphon, "constitute human worship, as you will have it. Well, be it so! But can I love, honor and obey God only by means of some particular mode of worship, or by the teaching of some special system of religion. Why need I break my head in endeavoring to discover some visionary creed instead of freely offering that homage which my untutored soul urges me to give, which my will desires, and which my judgment sanctions? And, candidly, for what imperative object, is this formality and solemnity of a council employed, in the endeavor to discover some imaginary mode of correct worship?"

"In the manner of which you speak are all men free to worship God," replied Ximenes, "until they shall have learned the positive commands of the Deity regarding this subject. Until the Almighty declare in distinct terms the manner in which he desires the homage of his creatures, they certainly are free to worship him according to the impulses of their hearts, and the dictates of their judgment. But when he shall have done so, they are certainly bound to act as he shall determine. At the moment when the first article of his authentic revelation

becomes known, their freedom to worship according to the promptings of reason, is abrogated. And this doctrine is in perfect accordance with those notions of propriety and justice obtaining amongst men. You yourself are not ignorant of the fact, that the ancient Dairi of Japan, were by different cities, differently honored ; each offering to the Emperor its particular tribute, and rendering unto him its special homage, according as the spirit or the custom of its inhabitants demanded. These different species of acknowledgment were equally acceptable to the Prince, since they were offered in perfect good faith, and as no uniform mode of vassalage had been described. But after the chief of the present dynasty had determined upon this point, and decided that homage should be represented by prostration, and ordered the tribute to be paid in silver and gold, no Japonian has attempted to do honor to his sovereign, or render him contribution in any other manner. Shall we concede a less right to the sovereign of the universe to determine the mode of service due him, than we acknowledge in the ruler of Japan ? And shall his subjects be less bound to respect his ordinances, than they are to abide by the decrees of their temporal monarch ?”

“Certainly not,” exclaimed the Jaco, “the illustration is perfect, and to the purpose. Nothing

appears more reasonable and just, than that we should honor the supreme being in the manner which he has prescribed, and in none other, however plausible to our fancy or concordant with our inclinations. This he justly can demand by virtue of the position which he holds with regard to us, his creatures, whom he has gifted with intelligence and free will. But how may I ascertain his will and pleasure on that point? In what particular mode does he desire that man should honor him? The pleasure of the Emperor may be easily learned; not so the will of God."

"The manifestation of the Divine will to men, which we term revelation," said Philo, the Jew, "is no theory but a fact, which, like others, may be ascertained from history. If the Almighty has spoken by himself, or through the medium of others, he has spoken to men; and these men can testify to the veracity of the assertion, and to the authenticity of the dogma."

"It is altogether absurd," interrupted Triphon, "to suppose, for a moment, that the Supreme Being would so demean himself as to descend from his high estate to hold converse with insignificant mortals,—to prescribe their mode of sitting, standing, eating and drinking,—as well as their method of thought, discourse or action. Really, your advocates

of revelation would fain make an insignificant censor of the powerful being of heaven? And, moreover, how is this revelation to be made? In what language is he to express himself?"

"I can discover no absurdity," replied Philo, "in the Father of the Universe communicating instruction and consolation to his favorite creatures, whom he has formed after his own image; more especially when I see a haughty philosopher, who owns no master in creation, amusing himself daily by teaching a small lap-dog how to dance and wag his tail. This pleasing condescension of the great Creator in familiarly conversing with his creatures on subjects concerning his honor, and their dearest interest, raises him in my estimation a thousand-fold. Such conduct at once gratifies my heart, obtains my confidence, and commands my thorough homage. But how will he communicate with man, you say? This need concern us not. For He who gave sight to the eye, hearing to the ear, and intelligence to the mind; He who taught man to clothe his ideas in intelligible signs, will readily find a way in which to make himself understood by his creatures. Even we, should we be consulted, might suggest some means by which He might transmit to us his pleasure and commands. It is not requisite that He should speak to each of us after a human

fashion. He may utter his commands in a voice of thunder, as he addressed our fathers from the flaming mount of Sinai; or signify his will to one or more chosen spirits, as he inspired the souls of the prophets. And these may communicate the heavenly message to their fellow men around. There can be no impediment to hinder God from thus revealing his will to individuals; nor can there be aught to prevent those selected, from receiving and communicating such instructions, since they can hear, comprehend, and make known to others. There can be no obstacle to the credence of these chosen ones in the messengers whom the Almighty may employ, since all have the power and the right to examine and test their credentials. Should they prove themselves to be, as they assert themselves, ambassadors of God, we have reason to hearken unto them as such. And the revelation which they describe is no less authentic and divine than if it were received from the mouth of the Almighty himself. Does not the Emperor of Japan make known his wishes to the governors of distant provinces by means of ambassadors? And has any one of these governors, finding the ambassadors' credentials to be correct, ever refused to consider the messages which they bore as significant of the imperial will? Now, no earthly ambassador is able

to afford stronger proofs of the reality of his mission than are the messengers of the divine being. What difficulty, then, can any reasonable man experience in believing their instructions with implicit faith, and in receiving them as authentic expounders of the divine will?"

"The sticklers for revelation," said Triphon, "tell us incredible things, which they dignify by the name of mysteries; things which our unprejudiced reason cannot understand. How can my assent be required to doctrines which far transcend my powers of comprehension. For what purpose has judgment been bestowed upon me if I am, blindly, to coincide, without exercising it, in matters of which I am incredulous."

"Reason was not given you," returned Philo, "to understand or to unravel the nature of mysteries, but rather to ascertain whether such as we denominate mysteries have really ever emanated from the Divinity. Further than this, reason cannot be made to operate, except as far as it may tend in assuring the will of the propriety of accepting that which bears upon it the stamp of infallibility. Mysteries are not opposed to reason, though they may transcend it. And where have you learned that God cannot reveal things which we cannot comprehend? Shall we attempt to circumscribe

his ineffable nature by the limits of our inconsiderable intellect? Is there nought in that Divinity which is beyond our appreciation? If not, we are his equals—an absurdity. If there be, he can reveal it to us, and we are in duty bound to believe his assertions, though we cannot understand the mysteries of his nature. The supreme being is necessarily infallible. He can neither deceive nor be deceived. Whatever he reveals to us is truth, and as such we are bound to hear and to remember it.”

“You have told us,” said Triphon, “that reason has been implanted within man, to guide him in his path through this nether world, and safely to conduct him to his appointed end. Now, either this guide is sufficient to lead man to the termination of his journey, or it is not. If adequate, why do you clamor for light from above, in the shape of revelation; if insufficient, how do you maintain the wisdom of the Creator, in thus having neglected to provide his creatures with the necessary means to perform the work, which he has assigned to them.”

“If man had preserved his native reason unimpaired,” answered Philo, “as he received it from the hands of his maker, it would alone have enabled him to fulfil his obligations upon earth, and merit and obtain his eternal reward. In his primitive state of innocence, it was all-sufficient to guide his

steps happily to the paradise of God. But man, unheedfully, by his own deliberative act, impaired his reason to such an extent, that it became no longer fit to serve as an exclusive monitor in a world of sin and passion. In his new but fallen state of being, it is unable to instruct him in the exercise of all his duties. It cannot explain to him clearly and distinctly all the tenets of the law of nature. It might, indeed, point out the law, but it must necessarily fail in discovering a practical application of it in reference to particular cases. What course, for instance, should man adopt, in order to obtain reconciliation with his God, whose wrath he has provoked? Reason can by no exercise of its powers, impart to him information on a subject of such vital importance. A God of infinite majesty has been offended, and that God, a father and kind benefactor. And by whom? By a feeble, helpless and ungrateful creature. What should that creature do to appease offended majesty, and to be again received into favor? On a question like this, reason is altogether silent.

“That human reason, such as it now is, is altogether insufficient to act in guiding man throughout his temporal career, and to impress him with a conviction of his duties to God, himself, and his fellow man, is proved with the accuracy of a demon-

stration, by recurrence to the history of the crimes, the errors, the passions which have characterized men during all past ages. It is matter of authentic record, that philosophers and sages—the wisest and most learned of men—the censors and instructors of the people—have, in innumerable cases, shamefully departed from the counsel and practice of the simplest and most evident maxims of the law of nature. It is well known that Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and other luminaries of the gentile world maintained and defended, as proper and expedient, the commission of many of the grossest deeds in the entire catalogue of crime. Bigamy, adultery, fornication, and infanticide, were openly supported and countenanced by these and other luminaries of the heroic ages.

“Now, if such were the errors and crimes common amongst the wisest of men, and those the most surely guided by reason, what must have been the condition of the coterporaneous illiterate and ignorant masses. How were they to ascertain their duties and obligations, in the absence of revelation? Man, as he now exists, could never have acquired, amid the wrecks of human reason, a sufficient knowledge of the law of nature. By it, he never could have discovered the threefold duties of man; the end of our creation; the consequences of our good and

evil deeds; the existence of another world; the eternal duration of the human soul; and other fundamental dogmas of the human destiny. Revelation was, then, absolutely indispensable to enable man to obtain the necessary intelligence in regard to his final as well as temporary destiny, in the present condition of his race. And whatever is necessary to prepare us for our destiny, the Deity is, by virtue of his character and attributes, bound to afford us. As certain therefore as there is a God ruling earth and heaven, so true is it, that a revelation has been given us;—and, believing this, we have nought to do but to ascertain the terms and the spirit of this revelation; and, having satisfied ourselves of their divine origin, faithfully and steadfastly to comply with their requirements.”

CHAPTER XI.

THE TEST OF REVELATION.

The wise of all antiquity have felt and acknowledged the inefficiency of human reason as a guide to our destined end. Original sin—the cause of the fall of the Angels, and of their punishment. Creation of man, and his fall—whence all our miseries proceed. If reason be insufficient to guide us, light from above is necessary—if necessary, it has been given. How shall we discover the true revelation. Revelation is a fact, that has occurred—then must its character and veracity be determined as those of other historical facts, and measured by the standard of human testimony. Such testimony may always be obtained. The Emperor's speech—recapitulation of the points established—conclusion of the fourth session of the Council.

“THE unnatural doctrines which have been advocated, and the horrible excesses which have been committed under the colors of reason,” said the Jaco, “prove to my full satisfaction, that powerful and conservative as it is, it is not that ever discriminating and philanthropic monitor commissioned from above to guard over and protect the human interest;—or that if it were originally intended as such, it has long since ceased to fulfil those purposes for which it was destined. It must be evident to all minds, that some great and deleterious revolution has taken place in its original constitution; by the effect of which, it has in a great measure been

deprived of its beneficent influence in the moral world. Human nature has been convulsed and shaken to its very centre. That man is no longer the being which he was intended or ought to be, has been felt and acknowledged by all observers of human nature, in ancient, no less than in modern times."

"In this view," said Josephus, "you are supported by the testimony of all the sages of antiquity. Cicero, in his Hortensius, states, that the ancient philosophers accounted for the weakness and corruption of human nature, by saying, that our souls were atoning for crimes committed previous to their union with the body. Pliny, the naturalist, whilst philosophising on the phenomena of human nature, as exhibited in all men, asked himself, 'Why is it a crime to have been born?' In other words, 'Why am I, coming into being, so weak, so unequal to perform the task assigned me among created beings?' 'I hate and I love,' says a Heathen Poet; 'and should you ask me why, I must answer that I cannot tell, but that I feel it to be a fact, and that I must suffer in consequence thereof.' Another of these poets wondered at his repugnance to what is right and just, and at his yearning after that which is wrong and forbidden, and declared that this strange disposition in man was to be traced to some disease

in his soul; to some violent impulses contrary to reason, and altogether inconsistent with his happiness. Of all the ancients, Plato is the most pointed and explicit on this head. 'Formerly,' says he, 'the portion of our being which partakes of the Divine essence, preserved for some time all its native dignity and vigor. At length, however, man's vicious propensities prevailed, to the great detriment of the human kind. It is thence, that proceed all those calamities which afflict us now.' In another place, he asserts that the leader of the race has impaired the nature and the faculties of man in his very birth. This great philosopher seems to have had some insight into the future economy of the Almighty respecting the fallen race of man. 'For,' says he, 'had not God stepped in between guilt and ruin, the world would long since have fallen into dark and chaotic confusion.' 'Our natural defects,' says Timæus the Locrian, 'we inherit from our parents. Hence we cannot divest ourselves of those evil propensities which engulf us in the consequences of the sin of our primitive progenitors.' When the ancients spoke of the Golden, the Silver, and the Iron ages, what could they have designated by the former, if not the state of innocence in Paradise? The Golden age included from the creation to the fall of man,—the silver, from the fall to the deluge,

and the Iron, from the deluge to the coming of the Redeemer.

“This belief of the three stages, of Innocence, of Sin, and of Redemption, has been the doctrine of all antiquity. The Egyptians, Persians, Chinese, Indians, Greeks, and Romans all professed it. Even the Mahometans admit the dogma of original sin. The same is the belief of the Jewish people,—and is beautifully expressed in the language of the Royal prophet, ‘For behold, in iniquity I was born, and in sins did my mother conceive me.’

“Jew and Gentile, therefore, Greek and Barbarian, do singularly agree on these great points, that man is no longer what he was intended to be, and such as he came from the hands of God;—that some great calamity had perverted his original and primitive nature;—that the great light of reason had been dimmed until its feeble rays no longer offered to man the beacon by which he might steer through the stormy ocean of life to the haven of eternal security;—and that some divine dispensation seemed needed to assist him in the attainment of his appointed end,—to enable him properly to fulfil the part assigned him by his great Creator.”

“But what,” observed the Jaco, “is the nature of the calamity, which has befallen human nature, and impaired reason,—and how was it brought about?”

“It is the loss,” answered Philo, “of original justice, and its attendant blessings, by an act of disobedience. It is the fall from a state of innocence into the condition of guilt. This dire event was brought about, according to the traditions of our forefathers, in the following manner. Before the sun and the moon had begun their course in the heavens, before the sound of the human voice had been heard, or the name of man known, the Father of man existed, alone, glorious, omnipotent, supreme. He needed not the presence of other beings. Their service or homage could neither increase his happiness, nor augment his glory. But his own bountiful nature prompted him to communicate to others a portion of the bliss which he himself enjoyed. But no beings as yet existed. He then resolved to call into life a number of angelic spirits, bright as the sun, and fair as the morning star. He created them to cluster around his throne, and to rule with him in the highest heavens. But these newly formed beings, proud of their high endowments, elated at their well-nigh omnipotent powers, forgetful of their dependence upon the Almighty, and fired with extravagant ambition, aimed at the attainment of equality with the Creator, and revolted against their Sovereign Lord. Whereupon his offended justice cast them down, from the high pinnacle of the heavenly

throne, into the yawning depths of an everlasting hell.

“When the heavens had been cleared of the rebel spirits, and the wrath of the Almighty appeased, he thought of replacing the void which their treason had caused in the celestial kingdom, by the creation of another kind of beings,—and this after-created subject, was man. He formed his body of the dust of the earth, and breathed into it an immortal soul. He modelled man after his own perfect image,—endowed him with a nature but little inferior to that of his angels, and conferred upon him the glorious gifts of will, memory and understanding. Immortality was his birthright. He placed him in a delightful garden, planted by and sown with his own hands. He constituted him lord and sole proprietor of this, his paradise. He was honored, served, and obeyed by the birds of the air, the beasts of the field, and the fishes of the stream; who daily waited on him for his orders, and cheerfully executed his commands. He was permitted the free use and enjoyment of all the luxuries of paradise; but, to test his fidelity and gratitude to his kind benefactor, he was interdicted the use of the fruit of one only tree. ‘Of all the fruits of the garden thou shalt eat, but the tree of knowledge thou shalt not touch; for in whatever day thou shalt eat of this tree, thou

shalt die the death.' A compliance with this command would have exempted him from punishment, and, after a short and happy sojourn in Paradise, would have served to raise him to one of the thrones, made vacant by the fall of the angels.

"But, like the latter, unfortunate man soon proved ungrateful to his maker. Deceived by one of those rebel spirits, who envied his happiness, he took the forbidden tree, and regardless of the solemn injunction which had been made, ate of its fruit. Under the very plant, however, where his disobedience had occurred, the Almighty met him, and forthwith pronounced his doom. The robe of immortality was torn from his shattered frame,—grief and sorrow oppressed his heart,—pain and debility seized upon his feeble limbs. He is condemned to die. The Cherubim stands by with the flaming sword, wherewith to execute the sentence, but compassion moved the Supreme Ruler. He remembered the dust from which he had created him, he thought of the image, which in his soul and countenance, he bore to himself. He stayed the uplifted arm of the angel of justice, and granted to man, that which he had refused to the aspiring angels,—time for repentance. And thus man, humbled, fallen, and degraded, is ordered to depart from the garden of Eden. His reason obscured, the powers of his mind

impaired, his will depraved, his whole being perverted, he leaves that happy abode which he had disgraced, to expiate his crime on the unfriendly soil of a desert earth. Here with his consort Eve, whom, in happier days, his maker had formed from his body, Adam lived on, the prey of appetite and passion, obliged to suffer and toil for his subsistence, for the space of nine hundred years, when they returned to the dust from which they had been taken, leaving their guilt and its consequences as an inheritance to all their posterity.

“To this unhappy phase in the career of man must be traced all those disorders of the mind, and all those diseases of the body which have since afflicted the human race. It was then that reason became deprived of its supremacy, the will of its command, and the heart of its integrity. And this mental and physical adulteration was entailed upon all the descendants of Adam and Eve, and thus do we all suffer for the sin of our first parents. It is in consequence of the occurrence of this awful calamity that man is no longer able to attain the sublime end for which his God intended him, without Divine assistance through the medium of revelation.”

“The history you have related of the origin of evil,” observed Triphon, “is indeed ingenious, but argues powerfully against the justice of your God.

It evidently confounds the innocent with the guilty. Why should I suffer for the crimes of an ancestor whom I have never known, never seen, and in whose guilt I could not have the remotest participation. On what grounds can my involvement in the punishment be justified? What tyrant have we ever heard of, who has visited the guilt of parents upon their descendants, for all time to come?"

"To inflict an actual punishment upon children for the crimes committed by the father would certainly not be just," answered Philo, "but to permit the consequences of the father's actual punishment to affect the happiness of his offspring, is not only no injustice, but cannot possibly be avoided. If my father be executed for misdemeanors committed by him, of what kind it matters not, his disgraceful punishment must necessarily affect me in my honor, and perhaps in my fortune. This perfectly accords with our notions of even human justice, the usage conformable to which cannot easily be abolished. It arises from the very nature of things. The annals of the Empire contain an instance of retributive justice, which will aid us in appreciating the true condition of the fallen nature of man, and of the justice of the Almighty in so constituting it. They inform us that when in the reign of the Dairi, the Cubos revolted against his authority, he caused

them to be arrested and executed. To fill up the place which had been vacated through their treason, he raised Teuco-Zama, a poor plebeian, to the high rank of Cubo. And to ensure himself of his fidelity, he elevated him on this condition—"if you prove faithful to my interest, your rank and dignity will descend to your posterity. The family of the Teuco-Zama will be the first in the Empire. But should it be the reverse, you and your house will be degraded to the condition of servitude, from which I have raised you." You know the history of this ill-fated family. The father revolted against his benevolent sovereign, and with his life atoned for his crime. His family to a man were degraded, and until this very day his descendants have been seen walking in your midst, the living exponents of the Dairi's severe but just judgment upon his faithless minister. And there is no Japonian whose opinion disapproves of it.

"Now this narrative is precisely applicable to the fall and punishment of man. The Almighty created the angels for his service; they proved renegades, and he punished them. He then created man to supply their places, and to enjoy their forfeited honors. Naturally man belonged to earth, but God elevated him to a supernatural state, establishing him in Paradise. Had he proved faithful in his

allegiance, Paradise, with all its blessings, would have been the perpetual inheritance of his descendants, and heaven their final home. But man, like the Teuco-Zama, became a rebel to his God, who forthwith deprived him of the dignity which he had held in the creation, expelled him from the garden of Eden, and reduced him to that state of slavery to which he naturally belonged; and unto this day we are atoning for the guilt of our first parents. And however much we dislike the penalty, we all feel the justice of the sentence, and regret the cause by which it was occasioned.

“It is in consequence of their loss of Paradise, and thus of original justice, that natural reason, as we now possess it, is no longer sufficient to point out to us satisfactorily our duties to God, and our obligations to our fellow men. Hence, light from above is necessary for guidance, and consequently, from above must have emanated.”

“But which of the many lights which shine from above, upon this dreary earth,” said Triphon, “are we to follow? The Jews, Christians, Mahometans, besides some fifty more sects, each hang up their own lamp of revelation, all of them shedding different lights, their hues varying multifariously as they glance upon the important question of human duties and obligations.”

“Revelation,” answered Philo, “belongs as I have before stated, to the province of history. If the King of Heaven has indeed sent ambassadors to signify to man in his name, his wishes; and if they have fulfilled their mission, it has become a matter of fact, and may be verified in the same manner in which we demonstrate all historical events. It is certainly true that every pretended statement does not contain the genuine facts. But shall we thence conclude that there is no truth at all in history? You certainly will not answer in the affirmative; for, by the art of criticism we are enabled to discern true from fabulous assertions. Not only are we qualified to ascertain, with infallible certainty the fact of their mission,—but the precise terms, the very contents of the message, which they were authorized to deliver. With respect to the missionary or recipient of the revelation, we have simply to satisfy ourselves that he is really what he claims to be, God’s true ambassador. Having satisfied ourselves on this head, we have merely to listen and obey. Nor is it difficult to arrive at this proof, for the characteristics of the ministers of God are of that splendid and conspicuous kind, which the blind can read, and the deaf be made to comprehend. The contents of the message, we are to gather, as we would authentic information of any other fact of past or present times—from com-

petent and truthful witnesses, who, on any great occasion, are never wanting, more especially on such a question as the authenticity of Divine revelation.

“The process in both cases is of an easy and simple kind. An individual presents himself before me, stating that he comes on the part of God to communicate to me important facts, involving consequences of the highest interest to myself and to my fellow men. I ask him for proof that he is really a messenger from heaven. He affords the required evidence, by performing, before me and others, deeds, which my reason convinces me, can be enacted by none other than the Divine Ruler, or one acting by his assistance and under his special guidance. Now the Author of our nature could not aid an impostor and trickster, hence, I fully admit and believe that he who thus claims my attention, is acting under the direction and by the command of God, and consequently that all that he asserts must be true and authoritative.

“Again, the contents of the message thus delivered in past or present times, are obtained with the same ease and certainty, likewise, by means of capable and faithful witnesses. That witness is competent who has had every facility to observe, and acquire a full knowledge of the fact to which he testifies. And that witness is trustworthy who can

have no motives in relating a falsehood, and no interest in deceiving the inquirer. Now, as I before said, witnesses like this, are never found wanting on any great or public question, such as this under consideration; hence we may ascertain with positive certainty both the real character of the ambassador, and that of the substance of his embassy."

"Nothing, assuredly," exclaimed Prince Fugurundono, "can be more simple, more natural, and withal more secure, than the method by which you propose to arrive at the true revelation of God's will. If he really has spoken unto man, it is impossible that it should not be discovered by a process of investigation so searching and direct; and it is equally impossible for pretended revelation to withstand its scrutinizing look, or to resist its piercing touch. While falsehood disappears before such a system, truth will shine out with yet greater brilliancy."

"What say you advocates of revelation," asked the Jaco, "are you willing that your systems shall be tested by the rules which Philo has stated, and are you prepared to abide by the result of the investigation?"

"The method of Philo," answered one after the other, "is just and reasonable, and altogether in conformity with the doctrine of common sense. It is moreover simple and evident, easily to be under-

stood and appreciated by all. We cannot then object to it, but adopt it as a full criterion of our respective tenets."

The Emperor now arose and expressed himself highly satisfied with the proceedings of the council. "Light," said he, "begins to shine in the midst of darkness; chaos and confusion are subsiding into method and repose. I see the many floating elements of this moral creation gradually assuming shape and form. They begin to present a visible and tangible aspect. The great question is now so reduced and simplified, that it may be easily grasped by even the ordinary mind, and definitely pursued by common penetration. I thank you, fathers of religion, for your unceasing efforts to give light to our eyes, and truth to our minds. Your labors must be as acceptable to God as they are beneficial to man. You are engaged in the noblest and most important work which can fall to the lot of mortal on earth. What can be a more inspiring task than the settlement of this great and perplexing controversy—as to what is right and what is wrong,—and in regard to the relations between heaven and earth, and the obligations of the inhabitants of the latter to the Omnipotent Creator of both. You are the advocates of his rights, and guard the dearest interests of his children. The united voice of both the sovereign and the sub-

ject will honor your memory after death, as it will applaud you while living. Your sun which rises higher than the hills of Frenoxama, will shine forever in the religious heaven, and illuminate every dark spot of the moral world. The Greek and the Persian will unite in adoring it. The soul of China and Japan will tender likewise its full homage, whilst the docile Indian shall court and be illuminated by its brilliant rays.

“In virtue of this brilliant effulgence, we have already learned the existence of a Supreme Being, Creator and Ruler of the Universe, the Father of men, the Recorder of good and the Avenger of evil deeds. We have ascertained, moreover, the eternal duration of the human soul, and the existence of another world, the native home of spirits, when loosed from the bonds of earth. We believe that never-ending happiness awaits the good, and perpetual burning the wicked souls departing this life. We believe that God has constructed a road, in which he desires all men to walk in order to reach the mansion of eternal bliss. We are also satisfied that God originally implanted within the breast of man, a guide, all-sufficient to direct his steps in the path of salvation, in the days of his primitive innocence. But that man, having disregarded the admonitions of this guide, and presumptuously ventured on life's stormy ocean with no

pilot, save his passions, it is now too late for reason unassisted to gain back for him his forfeited inheritance, and enable him to reach the ardently-desired haven of eternal bliss. Hence, we all feel and confess the necessity of a new and more potent guide. Now, that this mental luminary has already appeared in the moral heavens, Philo has proved to our entire satisfaction. But it is to be regretted that the splendor of its brilliancy is clouded by the number of false and deceitful meteors, each of which endeavoring to absorb its rays, is sometimes mistaken for the genuine celestial truth. But, you lovers of truth and justice, having dispelled the misty atmosphere which we have hitherto breathed, will enable us at last to discern with ease the true and genuine light of God's revelation."

The Council now adjourned for three days, that full time might be allowed the members for reflection on, and preparation for the momentous question of the authenticity of the Divine revelation, which, at the next session, was to be made the subject of consideration.

CHAPTER XII.

VARIOUS REVELATIONS.

Opening of the fifth session—Full attendance of members, and the great interest evinced by them all—Justo's appearance—Fifty priests offer their systems of revealed religion—Unable to stand the test proposed by Philo, the Jew—The Caliph explains the doctrine of Mahomet—Unable to prove the authenticity of the mission of the Prophet, or the truth of the Alcoran—Mahometanism shown to be a corruption of Judaism, tinged with maxims of Christianity, and varnished over with the allurements of Idolatry—Its rapid progress and apparent success, accounted for—The close connexion of Judaism and Christianity—Paul's exposition of the history of true revelation—It is three-fold; the natural, the written, and the Christian—In substance they agree—The essential point in which the latter two differ—the written law denotes a Saviour to come—The law of grace presents him as having come—The truth of the one is the falsity of the other.

ON the appointed day, the Council assembled to enter upon its fifth session, which promised to be one of the most important and instructive, that had hitherto been held. Every seat was occupied at an early hour. A conclusive evidence of the all-absorbing interest which each member felt in the momentous question about to be debated, was the fact that of the many who composed the assembly proper, not one, on this day, was absent. Justo Ucundono, accompanied by the young princes of

Japan, entered the hall a few minutes before the opening of the Council. He seemed cheerful and happy, hope and confidence beaming upon his countenance. That gloomy thoughtfulness, which during the preceding session, was marked upon his brow, had altogether disappeared. The candid avowal made by the Emperor of his belief in the many consoling truths which had been discovered, had made a deep impression upon the heart of his son, as these sentiments coincided uniformly with his own convictions.

The Jaco took his seat, declaring the fifth session of the Council of Frenoxama opened, and called upon the advocates of the doctrine of Revelation, to have their respective views thereupon arranged for immediate discussion. Whereupon, no less than fifty priests of the Chinese, the Japonian, and the Indian Deities, simultaneously started to their feet, to present their several systems to the assemblage, as requested. The most of them gave long and fabulous accounts of the sayings and doings of their gods in olden times. Portions of these narratives were so ridiculously foolish, that it was with difficulty the Council preserved its gravity at their recital. Even the most skilfully concocted of their stories, were but tissues of improbable and pointless romance. "To whom did Xaca and Amida reveal themselves,"

asked Philo. "At what time, in what place? What were the precise ideas, which they imparted to man? What credentials did they produce, vindicating the veracity of their professions, illustrating their superior endowments?" None of these questions could be satisfactorily answered. Tradition would have it that they spoke in some nameless age to some nameless persons, in which by unintelligible signs illustrated by an unknown tongue, they communicated certain ominous mysteries. This crude mass of revelation was wrought and fashioned into some plausible form, by a number of artful priests, conformably to their purposes. These gods were the ready tools of these ministers, who sold heaven to the highest bidders, and made the Deities ratify the bargain; changing their codes of morality as often as convenient. "It is well known," continued Philo, "that some of your Bonzas take the unwarrantable liberty of chastising some of their heavenly sovereigns for misconduct. Certainly it requires a vast deal of assurance, to ask a man to place reliance on such ridiculous assertions. And he that would listen to such vagaries, and believe such dreamy themes, would in other lands be deemed a fit patient for the mad-house."

These satirical and caustic remarks of the Jew, greatly enraged the idolatrous priests. They

foamed and raged, threatening him with violence. The Jaco at once called them to order, reminding them that they were in the presence of the Emperor, and not in the temples of their gods. But they menaced even him with the vengeance of the insulted gods. But he contemptuously smiled at their impotent denunciations, advising them if they wished to retain their seats in the Council, to take of the Jew, a few lessons in good manners.

“The history of Xaca and Amida,” said Herodotus, “is a faithful delineation of the lives and conduct of the gods of Egypt, of Persia, of Greece and of Rome. Many were celestial robbers and swindlers descending from above to initiate mankind in the details of these honorable professions. And old Jupiter, whom the Roman people once adored, united in himself, accomplishments like these in an eminent degree. For this very reason it was, that they regarded him as the chief of the gods. In my judgment, the good old elephant of India is preferable to them all. If he did no good, he certainly could do but little harm to our race.”

The Council generally heartily enjoyed the castigation which the sarcastic Israelite had inflicted upon the haughty priesthood; but Prince Ucundono, pitying them, made a sign to Philo and Herodotus to desist. The remainder of the professors of

Idolatry, perceiving that their cause met with such ill success, for the present, in silence kept their seats. The Caliph of Bagdad now arose, presenting, and urging, with an air of confidence, bordering on presumption, the revelations of the Prophet Mahomet.

“At a dark era in the progress of ages,” said the Caliph, “when the Children of Moses and the followers of Christ had strayed from the paths of truth and rectitude, the Almighty dispatched Gabriel to Mahomet to prepare him for the reception of a new revelation, which was destined to supersede the worships founded upon the law of Moses, and the Gospel of Jesus. Having prepared him for the high mission, the heavenly messenger bade him ascend to the middle heavens, and there handed him the great Alcoran, by parts. The law of the Alcoran abrogates all other laws, itself acting in their stead. It regulates all affairs between God and men, all concerns between man and man. It prescribes in the minutest terms, the public and the private, the religious, the civil and the military duties of each individual,—ruler and subject. Nothing can be conceived that is more simple, more consistent, or more secure, than is the law of the prophet, as expounded in this Divine Manual. It is the last and most complete revelation of God’s will that has been communicated to man.”

“The system of the prophet,” said Simonides, the Greek, “was a grand and bold one, did it possess no other merits. But from whom did your prophet receive his commission to proclaim a new revelation, doing away with all that had previously been promulgated?” “He received it from Alla, the great God, who has power, and jurisdiction, and rules over all the tribes of the desert, and nations of the earth.” “What proofs of the validity of his claims to the public confidence, on such an important subject, did he bring forward? Who has testified to the authenticity of the character which he assumed?” “Is not the word of the prophet proof sufficient?” inquired the astonished Caliph. “What stronger testimony can you require than the assertion of the Ambassador of Alla?” “But what proves him to be the Ambassador of Alla?” resumed Simonides. “The Alcoran testifies to the fact,” was the reply. “And who testifies to the authenticity of the Alcoran?” asked the Greek. “The prophet himself declared it to contain the revelations of Alla,” returned the Caliph, somewhat vexed.

“So Mahomet testified to the truth of the Alcoran, and the Alcoran to the veracity of the mission of the Prophet; quite a convenient method of making oneself a character,” observed the Jaco. “But have you in truth no other means of determining

the authentic character of the Alcoran and its expounder? Why did not Alla speak to Mahomet in a voice of thunder within hearing of the people, as did Jehovah from the top of Sinai to Moses, in presence of the assembled Israelites? Or why did he not confirm the assertions of the Apostle in a voice from the clouds, as Jesus was addressed in the River Jordan? Why did not Mahomet open from the flinty rocks of the desert, limpid streams, as was done by the prophet Moses? Or why did he not, like Jesus, command the dead to arise alive from their graves? Had such miracles been performed by your prophet, then indeed might you appeal to his word as confirmatory of your tenets,—and we would receive it.”

In the meantime the courage of the idolatrous priests had begun to revive, on perceiving that they were not the only ones placed in an uncomfortable position. “The history of your prophet,” said Triphon, “is that of a bold adventurer, and shrewd impostor, shaping his course according to the current of temporary success, possessing enough of political sagacity to turn ignorance, idolatry and fanaticism into one common current, on which he might float to the source of honor, wealth and power. The Alcoran is evidently nothing more than an exaggerated portraiture of Jewish, Christian and

“Idolatrous maxims, heterogeneously collected, and compiled with a skilful hand, to apply to the wishes, and to suit the requirements of the three principal systems of worship then prevalent in Arabia,—when blended into one. Whatever that is sound and consistent in the Alcoran was written many centuries ago in the law of Moses or in the Gospel of Christ. The superstitious and nonsensical matter contained therein, was practised by the roaming tribes of the Arabian Desert. The fanatical and the lewd, the ridiculous and the inconsistent elements of this pattern of religious manuals, belong to the prophet, and to those who aided him in digesting his deeply laid plan, and in concocting his text book of moral law. Not Gabriel, but some fallen angel, was evidently the prompter of the prophet in this original and herculean task.”

“Is not the successful operation of the law promulgated by Mahomet,” interrupted the Caliph, “a sufficient proof of its celestial origin? If it were really as you have represented it, is it natural to suppose that Alla should have permitted it to take such deep and lasting hold on the minds and hearts of so many of his children? And how otherwise will you account for its rapid and miraculous progress?”

“Mahomet,” replied Triphon, “had little reason to boast of his success, so long as he confined himsel

to the weapons which prophets, and in fact teachers of any kind employ, such as the sword of the spirit. Such tardy proselytism as these produced, was acquisition too tedious for his ardent mind. Casting aside such gentle instruments of persuasion, he grasped the sword of the flesh, and quickly solved the Gordian knot. With the eye of a statesman, he perceived the rare advantages presented him for the execution of his plan, in the quarrels and jealousies of the Arabian Tribes, the divisions among the Christians, and the general dissensions of the times. By employing these against each other, and moulding them all to his own purpose, he was enabled to command that success which you attribute to Alla's approval and co-operation. He became the common centre of factions, the means by which private revenge might be gratified, as well as sordid aggrandizement surely obtained. He became the common safety of all. One after the other of the tribes, then of the nations, flocked to his standard. He proclaimed his doctrine to the masses, presenting to them the terrible alternative of adopting them, or of being massacred. Such an argument from the lips of a mighty chief, could neither be answered nor evaded by an ignorant and helpless populace. Then the peculiar rewards promised the faithful, and the punishments threatened the disobedient, were adapted

precisely to the character of the Arabs, and in every way gratifying to their gross and luxuriant imaginations. The doctrines of the Alcoran, plain and simple as they were, were in every way calculated to minister to the appetites of the people. Consider moreover the ignorance universally characteristic of the inhabitants of Arabia at that time, and you are in full possession of the secret springs of the wonderful success gained by Mahomet and his system. And they are found to be, not emanating from mysterious sources, but demonstrable from the natural state of peculiar circumstances, of which they were the necessary consequence.

“Let us view a scene from Mahomet’s method of religious exhortation. There stands the Caliph of the prophet, with a broad, glittering sabre; opposite stand some hundreds of trembling infidels. The Apostle speaks: ‘Assert that God is God, and Mahomet his prophet, or bite the dust and die!’ ‘God is God, and Mahomet is his prophet,’ repeat the multitude. A wonderful conversion! Great indeed is Alla!” The Caliph felt that Triphon spoke the truth, and being a frank and honest man, he made no reply.

All eyes were now turned to the Jewish and Christian Divines, who were expected to put forward and vindicate their respective doctrines. The Christian

name had already acquired the influence of a charm in the Council, owing to the number of the professors composing it, their high acquirements, and the rare urbanity of their manner and demeanor. The Jews too, priding themselves on the antiquity of their race, claimed and received more than ordinary attention, and exercised a considerable influence among their associates. But what principally caused the other Divines to regard the Jewish and Christian doctors with more than ordinary interest, was the intimate connexion existing between their respective creeds; one being the natural successor of the other, whilst at the same time, according to their own assertions, only one, at any one time, could profess the true belief. This very circumstance excited in all a natural curiosity to see these two renowned parties brought front to front in the arena of religious contest.

The Jaco requested Philo to state the principles of the religious system which the Israelites held to be the true one. He however demurred, desiring Paul, the Christian, to give a statement of his views concerning true revelation. Amid the applause of the Council, Paul arose and spoke as follows: "It has pleased the Lord of the Universe to favor man with three distinct revelations, three distinct systems of laws; distinct as to the time, the form and the pecu-

liar circumstances under which they were made known to him; but all of one substance, the end and great object of each being the same. He first bestowed the law of nature, when he revealed himself to the ancient patriarchs, in a manner, simple, intelligible and comprehensive, as was suited to the primitive state of man. That law is the foundation and basis of the two subsequent laws, which are but fuller developments thereof, modified according to the era, and to the exigencies of the people whom they were to govern. This law of nature is an epitome of all the revelations which God has made to man. Hence it contains in substance all those dogmas of faith and morality which we now profess; but in a less developed state, which it was the task of succeeding revelations to elaborate. From it we learn the existence of the Supreme Being and his attributes. Moreover, among its chief elements may be mentioned, the immortality of the human soul, the existence of a future state of being, together with the rewards and punishments thereto attached; the fall of the angels and of man; as also the future redemption of the latter.

“Next in order is the Written Law which Moses received on the Mount of Sinai. It contains a more full explanation of the great truths inculcated by the original law, by the establishment of positive rules

and enactments. But this written law has yet to be more fully developed by another revelation from heaven, which was to be the last and final declaration of God's will and pleasure; the precepts and ordinances which it would establish, being ultimate and unchangeable. On the other hand, the object of the written law required that its usages and spirit should be but temporary in their character. It was designed merely to furnish a rule and standard of action, by which the chosen people of God might be enabled to flourish and prosperously increase in happiness, until the more complete dispensation would be made. With this latter it formed a connecting link, its whole spirit being to foreshadow a Redeemer to come. All its rites and ceremonies have reference to a more perfect one, because they are the types and figures of a great future reality, which cease at the moment of its arrival. At the very hour of the proclamation of the new law, the other is abolished. The written law presents a Saviour to come, the law of grace signifies a Saviour present. Hence, until his coming, the former was authentic; after his advent, it stood necessarily annulled.

“Christ, the Saviour, is then the object sought, both by the Jewish and the Christian laws. Hence, the Christian must concede, that if Christ be not already come, the Jewish worship is the approved

doctrine of heaven. And the Jew on his part must acknowledge, that if the Messiah has really come, the tenets of his disciples constitute the only true religion on earth. The great point now to be determined is: 'Has or has not the Messiah come?' "

CHAPTER XIII.

THE MESSIAH.

Characteristics of the Messiah. He was foretold by the prophets.

His advocates should be able to prove the fact of his earthly sojourn. They do prove it. Why he has been acknowledged by so few of the people to whom he was promised. He is followed by the Gentiles—and it was foretold that his own people would desert him—which is a strong proof that he is the Christ. In him are all the prophecies fulfilled. His life, death and resurrection. As he foretold he has established his spiritual kingdom. Whence the conclusion that he is the Christ. The Council assent. Justo's speech—he rejects the Pagan gods. He recapitulates the evidence of the Mahometan and Jewish systems. He enumerates the foundations for the Christian belief. The wonders performed by Jesus—they could be performed by none other than a God, or one empowered by him. God could never aid an impostor. Then is he the true Messiah. Justo's decision. Its reception by the Council. Adjournment.

“BOTH Jew and Christian then,” observed the Jaco, “agree in their belief in the great Messiah; the former assures us that he will come, the latter affirms that he has actually come. They agree in the absolute fact, concerning the mission of Christ, whilst they differ only as to the time of its accomplishment. Now if the Messiah has come, as the Christian asserts, it must be an historical fact, and as such can be tested by the method of Philo. If the Christian can establish this fact, we as consistent

men must adopt his system; but if he fails to do so, we must coincide with the belief of the Jews, for between the one and the other creed there is no middle place." In these views of the Jaco, the Council concurred. "How," continued he, "is the Messiah to be known? What particular characteristic does he possess by which we may single him out from other men? What circumstances are to indicate his presence? At what particular period is he to appear? Of what tribe will he spring? What country is to receive him?"

"All these things," answered Philo, "have been clearly marked out and distinctly foretold by many prophets, several thousand years past; and may be seen and read by all in our sacred volumes. The place of his birth, the tribe and house of which he is to be born, the period of his advent, the circumstances of his life and death stand positively recorded with historical accuracy and precision. The dying Patriarch Jacob, when imparting his last benediction to his assembled children, foretold to them, that the Messiah, the expected of nations, would come at the moment when the house of Judah would cease to rule. In definite terms also King David presaged the appearance of his wonderful Son, describing him minutely. Prophet Michaeas announced that he is to be born in the city of Bethlehem, of the house of Judah.

Daniel enumerated the four kingdoms, which were to precede that of the Messiah, recounting, moreover, the number of weeks that were to elapse previous to his coming, and the number that were to intervene between his birth and his death, and almost states the moment at which he is to appear, and again, when he is to leave the earth. Other prophets are even more minute. Isaiah describes his character, his life and death, and all the circumstances attending it, as if he had been contemporary with him, and an eye-witness of his actions. Bethlehem, as I said, before, is designated as the place of his birth, Jerusalem as the theatre of his sufferings. A virgin of the house of David is named as his future mother ; his own people as his murderers. Both the crime and its punishment are portrayed with such liveliness and truth, as to suggest the presence of the reality itself. And this entire narrative is related many centuries before its actual occurrence."

"If such be the characteristics of the Messiah," said Prince Fugurundono, "so many, so remarkable, so positive, that all may perceive and recognize them, how can there be a possibility of mistaking him, when he shall present himself to the world ?

"The Messiah was actually recognized," answered Paul, "when he came upon the earth, and to this very day is acknowledged to be, and worshipped as,

the promised of nations, the Christ, the leader, who has realized the expectations of the Gentiles. And to this fact a Christian world can testify."

"But the Jewish world," answered Philo, "denies the veracity of this fact, maintaining that the true Messiah has not yet made his appearance upon the earth. There have, indeed, at various times appeared false pretenders to the Divine character, but he to whom the splendid predictions of the prophet belong, and truly apply, has not as yet been seen upon the earth."

"What effectual argument can be urged from the fact that the Jewish world has protested against the truth of the Messiah having actually appeared?" said Paul. "You forget that the house of Judah has ceased to rule. His sceptre has long since passed from his grasp. The four empires of which Daniel spoke, have long since risen and fallen, and their existence is no longer known upon the earth. His weeks likewise have begun and have ended. Moreover, the abomination of desolations has stood in the holy of holies. The Messiah came at the appointed time, amongst his own,—but they rejected him; they welcomed him not; and now they have ceased to be his people."

"It is indeed, true," said Philo, "that the time of his coming seems to have elapsed. Many of the

symbols that were to precede, to accompany, and to follow his advent, have certainly appeared. We fear that his coming has been delayed in consequence of the sins of our nation. We still hope that the God of our fathers will finally be moved by our calamities, and send us from heaven, the Expected of nations."

"The Messiah promised to your fathers," answered Paul, "was none other than Jesus of Nazareth, who appeared in Judea, under the reign of Tiberius, at the precise time, and under the very circumstances mentioned by the prophet, in centuries past. In him all the types and figures of the old law are fulfilled, in him all their prophecies are literally accomplished."

"If Jesus be the Christ," answered Philo, "how shall we account for the fact that so few of our people have followed him—that he was disowned by the great majority of the nation, and followed only by the Gentiles? Was the Christ not sent to the house of Israel; and to seek the lost ones of the children of Jacob? He was not intended for the Gentiles."

"This very circumstance," answered Paul, "is the most convincing proof, and the most evident sign that Jesus truly was the Messiah, the Son of the Almighty God. He was, indeed, sent to redeem the lost ones of the house of Israel, and he did redeem such as were willing to be redeemed. But he was to be the Saviour of the Gentiles also. The fact

that his own people would disown, nay, even persecute and put him to death, has not escaped the notice of the prophets. It was one of the principal marks by which he was to be recognized as the true Messiah. And the reality of its accomplishment in the person of Jesus, openly proclaims him to be the salvation of Israel, the expectation of the Gentiles. 'His own people shall reject him,' said the prophet Isaiah, 'and give him up into the hands of sinners. And his murderers will remain hard-hearted to the end.' "

"All these assertions have literally been verified. He was delivered to the Gentiles, who at the instance of the ungrateful Jews, with savage ferocity condemned and executed him. At the last scene of his eventful and benignant earthly career, at Calvary, when the rocks were rent, and the creation stood aghast at the agony of its Sovereign, these treacherous ones for whom he had visited and undergone a life of austerity on earth, stood regarding the scene with cold indifference, or filling his dying ears with horrible blasphemies, exclaiming, 'His blood be upon us and upon our children.' The imprecation is being met with fearful realization. The avenging blood of their murdered Saviour everywhere tracks them, calling upon heaven and earth for the retribution which they have merited. They will not hear of

nor perceive, nor believe in their redemption. Where now is the Lion of Juda, and the house of David? Where is the holy city, and the tombs of their anointed kings? Juda is no more! Jerusalem has fallen! Her orphan sons and widowed daughters are lonely wanderers among the nations of the earth, without country or home; without altars, priests, or sacrifice; despised, if not hated, by all. And that Jesus, whom they crucified as a public malefactor, is now recognized, revered and adored as the great Messiah, from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof, in every clime under the firmament."

"The other characteristics foretold of the Messiah," continued Paul, "are literally true of Jesus, and of him only. For since these prophecies were uttered, who that has appeared upon the earth save him, that can verify the substance thereof? The Messiah was to spring from the tribe of Judah to the royal house of David; He was to be born in Bethlehem, of a virgin of David's house, and to be styled, by excellence, the son of David. Now Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem, of the tribe of Judah,—of Mary, a virgin of the house of David. In him, then, and in no other, can they all be fully verified. Again, the Messiah was to appear precisely at the close of the weeks of Daniel, when the house of Judah should have ceased to rule. At the exact

time does Jesus come; the sceptre of Judah having already departed from his house. According to the same authority, wise men were to journey from the East, to adore the child, offering him their gifts. The Magi do come to Bethlehem from the East, guided by a star, which circumstance had likewise been mentioned. They discover the infant Jesus, wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger. They adore him as the Messiah, offering to him their presents of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. According to Daniel, Christ is to be slain at the end of sixty-two weeks, and the people that will deny him, are not to be his. According to Isaiah, he is to suffer death for the sins of his people; and is to receive that death from the hands of that very people whom he had come to save. Now Jesus of Nazareth, was actually slain at the very time mentioned by Daniel, and under the circumstances noted by Isaiah, "for the sins of the people," as it was publicly avowed by his own judges, saying, "that it was expedient that one man should die for the people, that the whole nation might not perish." Besides, he was to arise from the dead on the third day, and to establish a spiritual kingdom, which, according to the prophet Daniel, is to overshadow and outlive all the kingdoms of the earth, and to stand forever. These and similar wonders concerning him were written cen-

turies ago, of the truth of which any one may satisfy himself. And the same occurrences he himself foretells, a short time before his death. Aye, he foretells his very death, and the minutest circumstances connected with it, in the very day of his triumph, at a moment when nothing seemed less probable. He announces in plain and distinct terms, that he will be slain, and on the third day arise again; that the city, whose inhabitants were about to crucify him, and which then appeared so beautiful and so mighty, would in a few years be levelled with the ground, so that not even a stone should be left upon a stone. All these predictions have been verified to the very letter. Their fulfilment has long since been recorded on the pages of history. As announced by himself and his prophets, on the stated day he did arise triumphantly from his tomb, walked, conversed, ate and drank with his disciples for forty entire days. The judgments predicted upon the devoted city and its people, came in due time. The leader came, as foretold by Daniel, with another people, and not a stone was left upon a stone.

“Before ascending to heaven, the Messiah established the promised empire which has actually overshadowed and superseded all other kingdoms of the earth. It has already stood for more than sixteen hundred years; it has not only broken into pieces

the four idolatrous kingdoms, but has long outlived all the principalities which it found on the earth, whilst yet it blooms and prospers, in all its youthful freshness, with vigor undecayed, preparing for other and yet greater triumphs. The countries which Sesostris overran, the kingdoms which Cyrus won, the lands which Alexander conquered, the provinces which Cæsar ruled; the hardy Gauls, the warlike Germans, the ardent Spaniards, the brave Hibernians, the mighty Britons, the wild Sclavonians, constitute but simple provinces of the glorious empire founded by Jesus of Nazareth. His mighty standard, the cross of Golgotha, has been planted, even beyond the boundless ocean; and tribes, nations, kingdoms and worlds, before unknown, have been gathered into his empire. The East is his, and the West is his; the North and the South are his; the Heathens have been given him as an inheritance, and the uttermost bounds of the earth do not circumscribe his possessions."

"Now," pursued Paul, turning to Philo, "I conclude, and I call upon you, as an honest and consistent man, to sustain the conclusion, by virtue of the principles by which you have professed yourselves to be governed; in accordance with the prophets and the law, and the oracles contained in your sacred books,—that Jesus, the son of David, the son of

Mary, born in Bethlehem, and crucified on Golgotha, is the Christ, the Messiah promised to the Jews, and expected by the Gentiles. For you can no longer insist that he has not come. That would be to represent the law as untrue, to stamp the prophets as impostors, and to designate the rites and ceremonies of the ancient worship as false from the beginning. The time of his coming is undoubtedly past. But you assert that he has delayed it in consequence of the number and magnitude of our sins. By what grounds, either in Scripture or reason, are you warranted in asserting this? There is nothing in the law, nothing in the prophets, nothing in the ordinances or traditions, which admit even the supposition of its veracity." Philo wept. He was still deeply attached to the law and worship of his fathers, but their hold on his convictions was deeply impaired.

The majority of the council were carried away enthusiastically by the persuasive and convincing reasoning of Paul. At this moment, it would have been an easy matter to cause the religion of Jesus to be declared the religion of the empire, by acclamation, but none were willing to anticipate the decision of the crown-prince, to whom all eyes were now turned. Justo arose amid the deepest attention of the council. The pagan priests trembled in their seats, for they well knew that neither they nor their gods had aught

of favor to expect from the young prince. "The gods of paganism," said he, "and their deceitful ministers have too long sported with the belief, and abused the confidence of men. It is time for us to vindicate our rights, and to discard those by whom have been deluded. These pretended deities are but vile impostors, the tools of their guilty priests. Mahomet was but a fanatic and a tyrant, and his worship base and senseless. Moses possesses all the true characteristics of a prophet of God, and his law is the true introduction to the last and greatest revelation of heaven granted to man. Jesus Christ is the inspired of prophets, and his law is the perfection and the accomplishment of all laws. Mahomet appears, and presents his fabulous narrative and absurd doctrines for belief; and on being asked the proof of their correctness, he draws forth a glittering sabre, before which the cowardly inhabitants fall down and submit. Moses addresses the Egyptian king, in behalf of the Hebrew people, in the name of the most high God. Pharaoh demands a voucher for the truth of his most extraordinary mission. And Moses changes the waters of Egypt into blood, envelopes the entire land in darkness, and convulses its entire populace with mourning, in a single night, by the sight of the awful death-couch, which is spread in every house for the cherished first-born of the family. These were

proofs which Pharaoh could not mistake. And we too, with the Egyptian king who ordered him to depart, must believe and acknowledge the divine authority of his mission.

“But far stronger than those of Moses, are the proofs of the mission of Jesus, the Saviour of the Christians. He comes into the world with the avowed purpose of instructing man in a new doctrine, with the intention of unfolding to him a new and unfailing road to heaven. He claims to be authorized, and to act in the name of God. His credentials are demanded. Whereupon he enacts miracles unheard of and inexplicable. He opens the eyes of the blind. He unlocks the ears of the deaf. He looses the tongue of the dumb, and he restores the sick to health, and the dead to life. These are authentic facts, alike witnessed by friends and enemies. Now these miracles require an agent, who has the power of using and controlling the laws of nature. But this can be possessed by none except God, or one aided and directed by him. Therefore Jesus of Nazareth, who performed these miracles in the broad daylight, and before the world, is either God himself, or one acting by his name, and under his authority. In either case we are not only justified but bound to hear, believe, and obey him. For the Almighty would never permit an impostor to execute things which require the

intervention of an omnipotent power. This would not only sanction, but directly contribute to the heartless deception of his people. Jesus then cannot deceive us, since he is, if not God himself, at least his most favored friend, performing works which the Divine will alone can operate. Hence he must teach us that which is just, correct and righteous; and we as faithful and obedient servants, must in every manner conform to his wishes, regulations, and commands.

“From this moment our task becomes not only more pleasing, but more distinct and tangible. We have found the great teacher, and I feel honored, from this moment, in proclaiming myself his disciple. He comes to us fortified with the authority of an infallible God. He has proved himself to be almighty, and hence can do for us all things. He is all-wise, and thus can teach all things which it behooves us to know. He promised that he would redeem the inhabitants of the earth. He has lived and died for us. He promised that he would rise again, and establish a spiritual kingdom. He arose from the dead, and founded an empire, on whose boundaries the sun of heaven never sets. He has promised life eternal to those that hear his voice, and obey his commands. Surely then he will not fail to redeem this last, best promise to man.

“We need not Xaca or Amida. We need not the

absurd fancies of the gods of the east or the west. We care not for Mahomet, or his paradise. Jesus of Nazareth is our God, from this day forward and forever."

The greatest excitement prevailed in the council at this declaration ;—the majority enthusiastically applauding. Others however murmured,—and many wept, some for joy, and others from rage. The assembly was adjourned for several days.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE BIBLE.

The decision of the Prince creates much excitement, especially amongst the Bonzas—Justo preserves his equanimity—Session of the Council in the open air—Various devices and inscriptions on banners—Each sect claims the true belief—Is the Bible the guide of faith—Jesus neither wrote, nor did he order to be written, the Bible—The Apostles wrote, on particular occasions, accidentally—The Book not designed as a religious guide—Reasons for this belief stated by Salmeron—His opponents admit that it was not the original mode of instruction—Then why should the latter be changed—How prove the identity of the Book—how its inspired character—The Saviour should have written, or caused to be written, a book expressly for our guidance, did he wish that we be taught in this manner—On the principle urged by the Dissenters, we are to deny the authority of the Manual.

THE decision of the Prince of Japan in favor of Jesus of Nazareth, and his law had excited great commotion, not only in the valley of Frenoxama, but throughout all Japan. The Pagan, Mahometan, and Jewish Divines of the Council were in a state of perfect uproar. The Bonzas more especially were convulsed with rage and mortification at seeing the young Prince thus abandoning the Deities of the Empire, and preparing to worship a foreign God. They threatened, if the attempts

were carried out, all manner of vengeance from the hands of the ousted heavenly sovereigns. But this demonstration from them was but the last explosion of baffled hopes. The Prince calmly remarked that by their undignified deportment, they were but affording him a fair specimen of the culture they had received from their gods, having not even yet acquired that necessary requisite of a debater, courteous and polite demeanor.

The Emperor was highly delighted with the spirited and independent course pursued by his son. "It was worthy," he was heard to say, "of the great Dairi." But amongst the Christian Divines also, anxiety prevailed. The Prince had indeed decided in favor of Christianity, but had manifested no predilection for any particular form of it. Each of them allowed himself to cherish the hope that the Prince might possibly be induced to favor his peculiar sect. The Prince, on his part, had just learned, not without considerable surprise, that even the Christians differed widely, amongst themselves, both in dogma and in practice;—and he caused notice to be given to all the Doctors of that faith to hold themselves in readiness to defend, before him, at the next session, the merits of their several sects. Since the first session of the Council, new divines had been daily arriving from all parts

of the globe. The full number now present exceeded one thousand.

The spring had bloomed forth in all its gay and joyous verdancy, when the Sixth Session was convoked on the first day of May, in the open air, owing as well to the delightful state of the season, as to the immense concourse of spectators, who had gathered around the former hall of their deliberations. The representatives of the different Christian denominations, previously to the meeting, were employed in erecting and adorning magnificent tents, each of them anxious to display to the best advantage the characteristic of his religious body. In turn, the professors of the other religions strove to imitate and surpass the tasteful style of the Christians. The whole presented the appearance of a magnificent encampment, erected in a semi-circular form. In front were placed elevated seats for the Emperor, the young Princes, and fifteen foreign ambassadors, who had just arrived in the valley from China, Tartary, and the Indies, to witness the novel sight of the religious contest being carried on at Frenoxama, with so much order, and attended with so much interest.

At nine o'clock, the Court, with the foreign ambassadors and their retinue, entered the encampment. They were received with loud applause, each

tent endeavoring to attract the notice of the Princes as they passed by them. When all were seated, the Princes cast their eyes around at the different tents, and wondered much at the various devices inscribed on their banners. On one was inscribed the name of "Arians," on another that of "Nestorians," on others those of "Lutherans," "Baptists," "Presbyterians," "Catholics," &c. "Where are the Christians?" asked Justo. A Rabbi answered, "They are all Christians, yet they hate, condemn, and quarrel with each other, with even greater malignity and acrimony than they bear towards us, Jews and Gentiles. The Presbyterian asserts the final abode of the Baptist to be Hell, and the opinion of the latter in regard to the ultimate residence of his enemy is precisely the same." "But why have they dropped the name of Christian," inquired Fugurundono, "and adopted that of Arian, or Lutheran, or others?" "Because," answered Scotus, "Arius improved upon the old system of Christianity, and to distinguish themselves from the old believers, those who approved of his innovations styled themselves, or were styled by others, Arians. And the same may be said of the others." "Are there any here," resumed Fugurundono, "who still profess the ancient system?" "Yes," answered Scotus, "that large body on the right, are the

ancient Christians. They are styled Catholics." "Why called Catholics?" "To denote their universality; they are found every where, and there have been found from the beginning. They are obstinate and self-willed, resisting all progress and improvement in religious dogmas." "Why have you Arians and Lutherans, and Baptists, and others made improvements upon the ancient system?" asked Fugurundono. "Did Jesus of Nazareth give an imperfect system of religion to mankind?" "The system of Jesus was perfect in the beginning," answered Scotus, "but in the course of time it became corrupt, and needed reformation." "At what time, and by whom," asked Salmeron the Catholic, "was the corruption introduced; and in what particular point did the corruption lay?" To this interrogatory, the Arians, Lutherans, Baptists, &c., gave each a different answer, and began a warm dispute amongst themselves, to the no slight amusement of the Catholics, who affirmed that the ancient system was incapable of corruption, and that moreover, improvement upon the work of God was impossible.

"But which of you gentlemen," said the Jacobite, "possess the best and most improved edition of Christianity?" The prerogative was claimed by the Lutherans, Baptists, and about two hundred other sects. "But at this rate," continued the

Jaco, "we will never arrive at a conclusion. Have you not some common standard by which these manifold claims may be determined, and this unpleasant dispute silenced; some universal rule by which the truth may be discovered?" "Yes! we have!" exclaimed some two hundred voices, and holding up a book, they said,—“Here is the volume which contains the true revelation of Jesus Christ. Take, read, and learn from it the genuine system of the religion of the Son of God. It will decide who is in the right, and who in the wrong.” “Have you all read and studied the book?” resumed the Jaco. “We have,” was the reply. “Do you understand its meaning?” “We do.” “And obey its instruction?” “Yes,” was the answer. “How then does it happen that notwithstanding this, you do not agree upon the same system, but pursue different pathways to salvation?” Here they began to accuse each other of not correctly understanding the book, but mistaking its true meaning, and consequently deducing wrong conclusions.

“Let us have the book,” said Fugurundono. Here a Bible was handed to him. “What is it?” continued he. “It is a collection,” answered a Christian divine, “of the writings of various individuals, extending over a period of some four thousand years. Moses is the author of the first, and

St. John, the Evangelist, of the last chapter of the book." "But how," observed Triphon, "can a book, that was begun four thousand years before it was completed, be a guide for man in the search after truth?" "The whole truth it contained, was not known until the last chapter was written." "What then was to become of the millions who lived and died before the book was completed? How were they conducted to the truth? Is the entire book, as I hold it in my hands, necessary to constitute my guide, or is a part of it sufficient for that purpose? If the whole book only, constitute a safe guide, it could be serviceable only after John had finished his portion of it, which did not happen, as history informs us, until several years after Christianity had already been established. From whom did the first Christians learn Christianity? If a part be sufficient for a knowledge of the truth, which part is it? And for what use is the rest intended?" These questions temporarily silenced the Christian disputants. They had never before occurred to their minds.

"The greater proportion of the book which they offer," observed Philo the Jew, "they have obtained from us. It is our law, and the language of our prophets, and as a distinct manual of religious worship, they can lay no claim to it."—"But we do

claim it," observed a parson, "because it testifies of the Christ. It announces him, describes him, and, as it were, introduces him into the world. It contains the written law, which is the foundation of the law of grace, promulgated by Christ. It is the text book of which Christianity is a commentary. Hence this first portion is necessarily connected with the second, called the New Testament."

"What do you mean by the New Testament?" observed Fugurundono. "We understand by it," answered the parson, "the second portion of the Bible, all of which pertains to the Christian law. It contains, and from it we must gather, whatever is necessary to be believed and practised in the Christian law." "Who composed the book?" continued Fugurundono. "The Apostles," was the answer. "Did Jesus write?" "No." "Did he command his Apostles to write?" "No." "Did the Apostles write conjointly or separately?" "Those who did write, wrote separately, as circumstances seemed to require it. And some Apostles did not write at all." "Did those who wrote, sit down with the avowed purpose of composing a book, from which their followers were to learn their religion?" "Nothing of the kind appears to have been the intention. They wrote at various times, in various places, without any common understanding or direct concurrence. Nay,

some wrote, when others had died." "Were the writings of one Apostle intended for the whole family of Christians?" "Not generally, since some evidently wrote only for certain persons, under very particular circumstances, with which the others had no concern."

"From these admissions," said Salmeron, "I suspect that you labor under some misapprehension with regard to this book, and the use for which it was intended. If Jesus had desired that mankind should learn his law by means of a book, his first and most imperative duty to his subjects would have been, to write that book himself, or dictate it to his disciples, and cause it to be composed under his own supervision, and the first injunction of his law should be, a command to all to read the book thus composed. It was in this manner, that the God of the Hebrews wrote the ten commandments on the tables of stone, and caused the same to be read by the people. But Jesus, you assure us, did not write himself, nor did he command his Apostles to write; nor are we positive that so much as a line was written during his life-time. Such conduct in a great and wise lawgiver, in your theory, is a perfect mystery, when you say that the truths and entire doctrine of Christianity must be obtained from this book. Were a human lawgiver thus to act, his course would be

regarded as emanating from the mind of a fool or an idiot. But yet worse, he did not make the slightest provision for the rectification by his disciples of this evident neglect, by commissioning them to write such a book. In all his intercourse with, and instructions to them, he does not even once allude to the fact. He tells them to go and teach the nations, to baptize them, to preach the gospel of salvation, but as for writing a book, or giving it to the people, it seems never to have entered into his plans, not even into his mind.

“And the truth of the matter is, that the book was not so much as known to the first Christians, not even to the Apostles, for the simple reason, that it did not exist. Scattered and detached writings, penned by an Apostle for particular cases, were known to those who possessed such writings, from being addressed to themselves. As to the book as it now is, it was not known till several centuries after the foundation of Christianity; when the faith of Christ was already firmly planted not only in the Roman Empire but in the remotest provinces of the earth. Nay, more, Christianity was widely spread, and deeply rooted, when John wrote his gospel, which is certainly not the least important chapter of the book.”

“These historical facts,” continued Salmeron,

“prove to my entire satisfaction, that Christianity was not in the first instance established, or intended to be established by means of the book of which we are speaking. And moreover, after, in different places and at different times, it began to appear by parts and parcels, it still remained hidden for many centuries from the knowledge of the bulk of mankind, more especially in the truthful and authentic form in which we now possess it. Perhaps not a line of the whole book was written for the sake of proselytism, but to instruct, correct, and reprove those who were already Christians, and to record the history of the life and death, the sayings and the doings of the founder of Christianity, and of the first disciples, the twelve Apostles. I now ask you as candid men, whether Christianity was established in the first instance and propagated by means of this or of any other book?”

The preacher answered:

“We cannot change the record of history, nor do we wish to contradict it. Christianity was certainly not established by means of a book. We all know that the Saviour instructed his disciples by word of mouth, which method his Apostles adopted in making known its truths to the heathen world.

“But what of that! Since then the world has changed—men and manners are not what they then

were—improvements have been made. The race is progressive. Whilst everything around us changes, why should we adhere with obstinacy to the antique, superannuated mode of propagating religion and morality? Why shall we not invoke the aid of the press? It has already wrought wonders in every department of science, why should it not likewise facilitate the means of teaching religion? Instruction by word of mouth was well adapted to the times of the Saviour, and the genius and customs of the people of that age. Our progressive age, however, requires a process more expeditious than this. I can distribute a hundred bibles in less time than you would occupy in teaching a single prayer to a child.”

“But remember,” observed Salmeron, “that a hundred bibles will not teach a child one single prayer. If applied to human affairs, your progressive views may operate exceedingly well, but I cannot perceive how they can bear upon the eternal and unchangeable Spirit of God. If the Saviour has established a method by which he designed that we should have expounded the true nature and spirit of his sacred revelation, this method must now be the same as it was on the first day it was promulgated, and must continue as such amid all earthly changes, until he shall revoke it and substitute another in its place. If the rule of guidance first ordained and

followed by Christ himself and his Apostles has been modified or annulled by him, you must show us when, how, and for what purpose this change has been determined upon. When or where did Jesus, or one commissioned by him say 'Go, write a book, and distribute the same to the people? Read the Scriptures, and learn from them my law?' How can you require me, or how can I consent to forsake this universal rule of ages, which has for its author Jesus himself, for one which he never established, alluded to, or acted upon? But the new rule, you say, is an improvement upon the old one. This I deny. It is easy, I grant, to read, for those who can, and have a Bible; but to gather from it God's true revelations, is quite another thing, as your countless divisions attest."

"And what, should we even waive this point?" said Philo. "Let us suppose for an instant that Jesus did intend that mankind should hereafter be instructed by means of a Bible, and that he ordered such a book to be written. What evidence have you to show that the volume I hold is the identical one written conformably thereto, by Divine direction, and inspiration? I open the book, and I consult it with regard to its own character. 'Are you a divine book?' I say. 'Are you written by heavenly inspiration?' 'Who is your author?' The book is silent,

—it cannot satisfy me. And yet this point is of the highest importance. For if the book be not inspired, how can I place full reliance upon it? It is in that case no more than an ordinary volume. How then may I learn, with infallible certainty, that the book you produce is inspired, and that it contains the elements of eternal life?"

"Simply," interrupted a parson, "by opening the book and reading. You cannot have lost your eye-sight. Do you not see that this is the gospel of Matthew, the other that of Luke; that this is the epistle of Peter, the other that of Paul?"

"I see," said Philo, "that the name of Matthew, Luke, Peter and Paul, are inscribed upon those pages, yet this by no means satisfies me that Luke or Paul wrote those passages. Suppose that I would inscribe your name at the head of the history of the Empire just published. Would that, think you, make you the author? And if Luke and Mark did write them, were they written under the influence of inspiration at the time? Or were they, indeed, ever inspired when writing? Luke and Mark were not even apostles, and yet you put forward their writings as oracles, whilst at the same time you reject a book of great merit, written by one who is styled an apostle in this very volume."

"When the Dairi," observed Prince Fugurundono,

“granted the great charter of liberty to Japan, he caused copies of it to be prepared under his personal supervision, which, after having carefully examined, he signed, affixing to them the great seal of the Empire, to remove all possible doubts of the present and future generation, as to their origin and character. He caused it, moreover, to be translated into every dialect then spoken in Japan. Now, if the Dairi thus acted, governed merely by human prudence, can we expect a less amount of foresight in the wise lawgiver of heaven, especially in an affair of so much greater moment to mankind than is the charter to the Japonians? Besides, the law of God being intended for all tribes and nations, it was right and proper that the books of the law should have been translated into every tongue and dialect spoken under the sun.”

“We all remember,” continued Fugurundono, “how difficult it was to procure a correct copy of the writings of Confucius, that out of the one hundred and twenty copies sent to Japan, not two were found to agree in their detail. And according to the Chinese literati, not one of these specimens was a correct version of the original. If such be the difficulty in obtaining the genuine writings of only one author, so renowned as was Confucius, what security can I promise myself, that the book

you have put into my hands is a faithful copy, an impartial transcript of the original text; when it is, moreover, made up of the writings of so many different authors, all of them differing in style, taste and genius. Some of these writings were originally penned in the Hebrew, some in the Greek, and some again in the Syro-Caldaic languages. Have all of you studied Greek and Hebrew, so as to be ready to compare the copies you have with the original text? Are these books which you have put into my hands the whole law, and nothing but the law? Where is the volume of the wars of the Lord which it mentions? Why do some of you admit more, and others fewer of these books, as authentic? Why do you make additions in some places, and take away matter in others? How can you expect me to commit myself to the guidance of this book, until all these doubtful points shall have been explained and determined upon?"

"And furthermore," added Philo, "how was each individual in the early days to procure for himself a copy? In former days every syllable of a work had to be written by the hands of men. To execute a single copy was a matter not of days, but of years. The art of printing was not then invented. How were the poor, the great body of the people, to be furnished with Bibles? One single copy could not

be procured for the half of an ordinary fortune. Even now there are millions and millions to whom the Bible itself, in consequence of its rarity, is unknown, notwithstanding the ingenuity of modern contrivance to multiply copies."

The ministers of the various dissenting Christian sects attempted various replies, but none of them were to the purpose. This, even the Pagans, perceived, and therefore pitied them. "In truth," said they, "it is more difficult to defend this Bible system than what you are pleased to call our visionary fancies. Now, if you succeed in extricating yourself from the labyrinth into which the Jew has placed you, you must indeed be the inspired of God."

"But worse than all," continued Philo, "I do not see what claim these gentlemen can have to the book at all, or how they can confide in it, acting in accordance with their own principles. The book was written more than sixteen hundred years ago. The majority of the Bible Christians do not date back even one hundred years. Hence, when they came into being, the book had been fifteen hundred years in the exclusive possession of another people, and subject to their entire supervision and control. And that people, according to the belief and doctrine of the parsons, was deeply corrupted and debased, both

in the dogmas of the creed, and in practical morality. What security, then, can you have that the book which you have taken from them has not been infected with their own corruption, especially as it has been copied and re-copied again and again by those same immoral men? How, under these circumstances, can you rely on the books yourselves, or recommend them to the belief of others?" To these pertinent and searching inquires, the ministers had not a word to reply. They looked vexed and confounded, and fell to quarreling among themselves, to the no little amusement of the infidels and pagans.

CHAPTER XV.

THE INADEQUACY OF THE BIBLE.

How is the Bible to be used?—One passage contradicts another.

Human constitutions are invariably very specific, yet have a judge and tribunal to expound their meaning. If this be the text book, the constitution of heaven is obscure, vague, and uncertain. The readers of the Bible cannot agree even upon fundamental points—It is a positive cause of difference in religious opinion—Protestants, however, do not glean their faith, from its perusal, but, like Catholics, from the precepts of fathers, mothers and teachers—If we must hearken to some doctrine, it is safer to hear the Catholic, teaching in the name of the Church, than individual ministers on their own responsibility. Our standard of faith must be safe, universal, within the reach of all—Not such is the Bible. Remarks of Justo and Nobunango.

“BUT should we even grant,” said Salmeron, “that you have the book complete, correct, and entire, in a condition faultless as you would wish it, fresh from the pen of inspiration, how, pray, is the great bulk of mankind to make use of it? And how, more especially, were they to profit by it, in the first ages of Christianity, when, out of a thousand men, scarcely one was acquainted with the use of letters? Even in our days, you will find that with all our improvement and progress in civilization, taking mankind as a whole, there is not one person out of

every hundred who is able to read. Did the Messiah come only for the rich, who were able to procure the books of his law, and for the learned who were able to read them? If so, he was not the Saviour of all men, but only that of a favored few. And yet we have been told of him, that his gospel was to be preached to the poor. If He had intended that his gospel should be obtained from a book, he should first have caused the art of printing to be invented some fourteen hundred years earlier, than it has been known, and he should have established common schools all over the world. He could not certainly impose upon mankind the performance of an impossibility. If he wished us all to read and understand his law, he was bound to furnish us with the means of doing so. His Bible was useless to mankind, until mankind were able to use it.

“But even passing by the ignorant multitude, who, however, have souls to be saved, no less than the learned and the wise, how is a man when gifted with knowledge and cultivated mental powers to discover his course of action from this book? How is he to derive instruction from it?” “In the simplest manner imaginable,” answered a parson—“Read it. The book contains all that is necessary for salvation. It is clear and intelligible. Peruse it with attention and in a spirit of humility, and God

will unfold to your heart the sense of his oracles. He will teach you what things to do, and what to avoid."

"I have read the book," observed Fugurundono, "since you have placed it at my disposal, day after day, and with all possible attention, actuated by a strong desire to master its principles, and appreciate its meaning; but I find myself in a complete labyrinth. Sometimes I think I have made out a point, when, often, the next passage overturns the foundation on which I had hoped to erect my spiritual citadel. Whatever positive and tangible knowledge I have of the truths of Christianity, I have gathered from conversations with Christian divines. The book has solved none of my doubts, nay, it has rather increased and multiplied them. I have indeed read in it many sayings and doings of Jesus and his Apostles, but at times they seem so contradictory of each other, that I am utterly at a loss to reconcile their substance. To gather from this complicated, obscure and mysterious book, a systematic code of laws, a positive method of religion, is more in my estimation than human skill or ingenuity can accomplish. And what is worse, every one disclaims the right of aiding and assisting me in my endeavors. I am told that I must read and judge for myself. And should I go astray, there is

none to set me right. Aid and guidance so highly recommended, so readily proffered in other things, is in this most important pursuit deprecated and refused to me.

“I take up the constitution of a political body of men, and I find a consistent system of positive commands or prohibitions, set forth in the clearest and most precise terms, which language can afford. I can at once comprehend that which is commanded and that which is prohibited. Not being satisfied, however, with the explanation of the law here offered me, I find that the lawgivers have moreover appointed tribunals and judges to decide on the spirit and meaning of the law, and empowered them to satisfy all doubts, and terminate all disputes that may arise. No legislator has left his enactments to the arbitrary interpretation of interested individuals. All human ordinances have their commentaries and their expositions, and nothing is left to the whim or caprice of the people, no, not even in the most democratic governments in the world.

“Here, however, I have the most vague, intricate system, which has ever been presented as a standard of conduct for the observance of man, and it moreover treats not of trifling, temporal concerns, but of matters involving his deepest interest, that of his eternal welfare, and he is afforded no judge or

tribunal, to assist him in discovering its real meaning. He is, on the contrary, referred as an arbiter, to his own feeble, fallible judgment, to determine, as best it may, on this the greatest of all questions. Is then human prudence more scrutinizing and acute than Divine wisdom? And is man more provident than God? In this work, I met with some sentences, which, at first appeared to be commands or prohibitions, but which upon a nearer inspection and more careful examination, prove to be neither the one nor the other, and often the very contrary of what they had at first seemed. One text destroys that which a preceding one had laid down as a foundation. Certain passages and expressions are obscured in such a cloud of mystery, that the most powerful intellect cannot succeed in discovering their true sense. It is to me altogether inexplicable that men should be so careful in providing adequate exposition for human laws, and should yet maintain that the intricate, eternal law of God needs neither tribunal nor judge to expound it correctly, and can safely be committed to the government of stupid ignorance, or the instincts of blinded passion. The immense number of Christian sects in attendance at this Council, demonstrates the absolute necessity of some tribunal to which appeal may be made, and whose decision shall be conclusive, positive, and ultimate."

"It must indeed be admitted," said one of the parsons, "that among the followers of the Saviour, slight shades of difference on minor points of faith and discipline exist; but we all fully agree, even to a man, on those great fundamental points which it sets forth, and act conformably thereto in doctrine and practice."

"What do you understand by fundamental points?" asked Salmeron. "We learn, for instance," answered the preacher, "from this book, that God is one in nature, and three in persons. This we would term a fundamental point." "You are quite mistaken in your fundamental points," interrupted another parson, "by what right do you presume to define what are, or what are not elementary dogmas of the Christian faith? Contrary to your assertion, God is necessarily one in nature and one in person. The holy volume does not, or could not contain such absurdities. The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, which you call persons, are simply three distinct powers of the Deity, and not persons." "I will give you an instance of a fundamental article of faith," observed another,— "Jesus Christ is God and man." "Your proof," exclaimed a voice. "I and the Father are one," was the ready reply. "But what of this other scriptural point," returned the voice,—"the Father is greater than I." "If there be a being greater than Jesus,

how do you make him out to be God? God can have no superior." "Whatever our minor differences may be," observed a pious doctor, "we are all agreed as to our opinion of the consoling dogma, that Jesus came down from heaven to die for us all. Whatever the dissimilarities in our respective modes of worshipping him upon earth, we are all filled with a permanent joy in the knowledge that we all shall meet him and each other in his heavenly kingdom." "You are too charitable, friend," exclaimed a Calvinist. "It is quite evident from scripture, that there are numbers who will not partake of the great salvation; they will not share in the merits of the Redeemer; he has died for all, but has destined some to do tribute to his justice in hell." "You mean his cruelty," interrupted the deist; "for cruel assuredly must he be, if he has created a human being for the purpose of ultimately consigning him to eternal punishment." "Aye, away with your hell," exclaimed a good-natured parson, "that will do very well to affright women and children, but to those who comprehend the all-preserving doctrine of Jesus, such talking appears extremely absurd. We know and feel that we shall all be saved in the end." "Impious man," exclaimed several voices. "You shall one day be made to feel those torments you now ridicule, for unless you be converted to the Lord Jesus, hell must be your inevitable portion."

"Why," observed Triphon, "your fundamental points seem to be quite unsettled. What conclusions am I to form? Whose opinion must I follow? The book is altogether passive. It permits me to embrace either side or none at all. I must now think that the book is not only an unsafe guide, but that it is the sole and positive cause of many absurd and even scandalous divisions, and were I a Christian, I would at once denounce it, as an ensnaring tissue of fallacies, in fact, as a positive evil; unless its spirit and precepts be expounded to me by some competent judge or tribunal."

"This is really too much," exclaimed a reverend minister. "The good book is a positive cause of evil! I call on you to retract this insulting language. What would become of so many communities of Lutherans, Calvinists, Methodists and others, each denomination numbering millions, had not the Bible united these masses in one faith, one hope, one baptism, and in short, one spiritual fraternity? How is this? According to your assertions not any two individuals should agree upon the same doctrinal points, and upon the same manner of worship."

"Upon my honor," said Triphon, "such actually would be the result, were you practically to abandon yourselves to the exclusive guidance of the Bible. Surely you do not think that I am so foolish as to

suppose that the Bible has made you a Lutheran, your neighbour a Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, or a member of any other sect. No, no, it is not the Bible that has united the various Christian denominations here represented, in certain articles of faith, and systems of religious practice. Their faith was already alive when they took up the Bible; which they read for no other purpose than to find out passages in it by which the belief and system they already possessed might be vindicated and sustained. Your fathers, mothers, and teachers, educational and spiritual, have been your instructors in religion, as well as in other matters. They had prepared the soil of your hearts and minds to receive their own peculiar doctrines, and views of practical religion; nay, more, they were already planted there long before you were capable of reflection on these important subjects. The Bible was indeed afterwards put into your hands, not to plant or sow the seeds of religion, but to cause them to spring from the previously cultivated soil, to grow, to strengthen, and permanently to mature. Hence you were carefully directed to peruse certain texts and passages, which were calculated to strengthen the views which you had been led to adopt; whilst other portions of the volume unfavorable to such views were carefully kept beyond the range of your investigation.

“Your pretensions then of following the Bible, are a most solemn mockery. You are not guided by the Bible, but the language therein is tortured by Reverend instructors, to favor such sentiments and views as are most conformable to their wishes. Professions of faith, Creeds and Catechisms, are brought into requisition to aid their disciples in establishing their faith, and marking out the routine of action. The Unitarian takes up the sacred volume, and reads from it the dogma of Unitarianism, so likewise do the Calvinist and the Methodist, each of them affirming on the same holy book, that in his opinions, he alone is right, and all others differing from him, wrong.” “Now,” continued Triphon, “if you each believe in the all-sufficiency of the book to teach you the way of serving God in a proper manner, why not abide by it? Why have recourse to so many other means to gain instruction in the knowledge of the Divine nature and law? If you doubt its sufficiency, why not frankly confess it? It is dishonorable no less than inconsistent, to profess a series of principles, and practise a number of actions, directly at variance therewith.”

“With what consistency then,” remarked the Jaco, “do these new Christian sects censure the ancient Church for instructing her followers in a certain defined system of faith and practice, and for

expounding the Bible for them agreeably to that system? Is not this what they themselves do? The ancient Christians thus act from principle, and openly avow it to the world. The moderns disclaim the principle, and yet adopt the practice. All the preaching and teaching and religious meetings and conferences, have no other object in view, than to instill not by the Bible, but by word of mouth, their own particular views and notions into the minds of their hearers. The ministers of the Bible-Christians are equally as authoritative in their method of teaching, as are the ministers of the ancient faith. They claim an equal right of being heard, nay their dictation is even more imperious. Now, if follow some authority we must, whom is it the safest to believe, one who teaches us in the name of the great universal Church, and precisely the same matter which has been taught for centuries by the best and greatest of men, and which are at this moment taught by thousands of the ablest divines, and received with implicit faith and reverence by the wisest of intelligent beings: or, on the other hand, to follow and receive the lessons of every new and time-serving upstart, clerical pretender, offering to our intellect and heart his own peculiar innovations and vagaries, when he himself is perhaps unable to unravel the meaning of the sacred text, although he assumes the rank

of a commentator! I leave it to the Council to determine."

"That the Messiah," said Justo, "when he planted his kingdom on earth, did leave to mankind a guide, by whose agency his eternal kingdom might be reached and entered, is a truth, which all Christians admit. The disputed question is, 'which is that guide'? The ancient Christians tell us, that it is the teaching Church; the moderns answer, it is the Bible. It is our task to ascertain which of the two is the correct authority. Reason will tell us that such a guide must be, first of all, secure and never failing, that it may infallibly lead every sincere inquirer into the way of truth. Secondly, it must be universal, that it may apply to all times and to all places, and be adequate to the requirements of all people, under whatever circumstances they be situated. Thirdly, it must be within the reach of all. It must be infallible, otherwise we could place no reliance in it. It must be universal, else it would not embrace all who need its counsel. It must be within the reach of all for, if not, to some it would be useless. Now, if you, the advocates of the Bible, can demonstrate to the Council, that the guide you offer us is a reliable one, an universal one, and a perpetual one, we shall receive it with thankfulness, and follow it with confidence.

“Now that the merits of this book have been discussed before you, it is expected from the candor of this august Council, that they fearlessly declare their convictions as to the efficacy of this book as a guide for man to heaven. Does it find all the requisites necessary for the fulfilment of this important task, or has it any of them? Is it a safe guide?”

“No,” the Council thundered forth. “It leads one to adore Jesus as a God, another to revere him as a simple man. Both cannot be in the right, one is therefore deceived, and the guide is not safe. Does it apply to all times and places, and is it adapted to the necessities of all men?” “No,” the Council answered, “the unlearned cannot make use of it; but these constitute the great majority of the human race.” “Is it within the reach of all men?” “No,” was the emphatic answer. “The poor could not obtain its aid in former ages, and yet in those days there were, as now, souls to be saved. And for many centuries it could not be obtained by the rich or poor, for the simple reason that it was unknown to the bulk of mankind. But should we possess the means of profiting by it under the most favorable circumstances, it could never direct us in the knowledge of God and of his sacred law. Now the Almighty as a wise lawgiver and generous parent, could not have bequeathed to man a guide so un-

safe, so unprofitable, and so difficult of access, and which even when possessed could be of no practical use. Therefore the book which you have handed me is not the guide granted us by God, to direct us in the path of his eternal truth. We must look for it elsewhere."

The great majority of the assembly received the Prince's decision with much applause. "If the author of Christianity," added Nobunango, "be God, he must have foreseen the many disputes which in the course of ages must be engendered among his followers, and under this foresight, he was bound to provide some accurate remedy by which they might be allayed, some antidote by which their baneful consequences might be neutralized. Now the book in question, cannot by any possible supposition terminate the difference of doctrinal opinion between contending parties, for it is mute and passive, and can be construed into a plausible voucher to endorse any error or absurdity. Hence the Almighty could never have intended that the book in question should constitute the standard in controversies on an affair so important, as is the eternal destiny of man. As surely then as the author of Christianity is God, there is some more definite guide to conduct us to the mansion of truth and the regions of eternal life." The Council now adjourned until the following day.

PART III.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE TRUE GUIDE.

Opening of the Councils—seventh session. St. Francis Xavier assists in its debates. Religion is propagated by preaching in God's name. Apostolic witnesses of the works of Jesus. These are competent and trustworthy, and the facts they relate, plain and obvious. Promise of Jesus to establish a kingdom—foretold by Daniel—the common opinion amongst the people. He prepares the world for the change. He educates his disciples for their future employment. The kingdom was to be spiritual—hence did he establish it after his mortal life was ended. He proclaims its charter. He ascends into heaven.

THE Council again met to enter upon its seventh solemn session. It was distinguished by the presence of St. Francis Xavier, who had just arrived from Firando with several young noblemen of that place, among them Don Sebastian, son of a well known sovereign of the adjacent country, and who with the others had embraced the Christian faith. Xavier, it may be remembered, was present at the opening of the Council, but having been urgently importuned by several of the neighboring cities of the empire, to visit and preach to them his wonderful

doctrine, which was now becoming famous throughout Japan, he found himself compelled to discontinue for a short time his attendance at the Council, to fulfil this mission of love. His charitable compliance met its due reward. He had baptized, since his departure, several thousand idolaters with his own hand, many of them belonging to the most distinguished families in the land. His presence excited the deepest interest. All were anxious to see, hear and converse with a man, whose name had become so familiar in the East. On returning, at the opening of the present session, Justo offered him a place amongst the princes of the blood, which he modestly declined, preferring to be seated among his brethren, the Doctors of the ancient faith. The whole Council, with the exception of the Modern Christians, were overjoyed at his arrival amongst them, at this interesting stage of their proceedings; hoping to derive from his wisdom and experience no inconsiderable aid in deciding the perplexing question which now occupied their attention. They knew him to be the most celebrated minister of Jesus of Nazareth, whose divinity had been proved to them, and whose law had been declared the revelation of Heaven. They knew, moreover, that through his means, several thousand pagans had been instructed in the knowledge of Jesus and his law. They natu-

rally felt curiosity to ascertain by what means he had convinced so many people of the Divine truths, and persuaded them to embrace the doctrine, and conform to the rules and ordinances based thereupon.

“Tell us, great father,” said the Jaco, addressing himself to Xavier, “by what secret source have you been enabled to impart to so many of our countrymen, the knowledge of the religion of Jesus of Nazareth, and yet more how you have induced them so enthusiastically to adopt it?”

“That secret,” answered Xavier, “has been known for sixteen hundred years. I employ the same means that Jesus himself used when instructing in person, the people of Judea in the knowledge of the kingdom of heaven, which he had come to bestow upon them. The same instruments he bequeathed to all who should thereafter teach in his name, and he has rendered them equally efficacious in their employ, as they were in his own. And ten thousand Japonians baptized by these hands attest the virtue of the means which I have used.”

“What is meant by teaching in his name?” continued the Jaco. “To be sent by his authority, and to teach the things which he has commanded to be taught”—was the reply. “But all these ministers assembled before us,” answered the Jaco, “say that they are sent by his authority, to teach the things

which he has commanded, and they inform us that these things are contained in a book, from which we are to gather them, calling it the great guide, which all must follow. How shall we distinguish the one who comes armed with authority from Jesus, from another who comes without it?" "In the same manner," answered Xavier, "as you would discover a true or false messenger from the Emperor; namely, by the examination of his credentials." "But the Emperor liveth," returned the Jaco, "ready to provide his ambassador with credentials, and to testify to his character." "The Emperor," answered Xavier, "may furnish these credentials either in person or by means of the government, established by him, and acting under his authority, and in his name. So may Jesus testify to the character of his minister; either by clothing him with extraordinary powers, to prove the celestial nature of his mission, that is, such as may enable him to perform miracles which it is not in the power of mere man to accomplish; or, he may do the same indirectly by bestowing the necessary authority on the spiritual kingdom which he has established upon the earth."

"Your answer is just and plausible," said the Jaco, "and if you can show to our satisfaction that Jesus of Nazareth has really commissioned men to teach his law, then the great question will have been

settled, and our difficulties removed. We shall then know which is the guide we have to follow."

"The fact of the establishment of this spiritual kingdom amongst mankind," answered Xavier, "its nature and character, its end and object, may be ascertained with the same ease and certainty, by which we satisfy ourselves of the fact of the establishment of the Japonian Empire, and the character of its government. The basis upon which rests our knowledge of either is the public fact, of such having taken place before the eyes of the world, and thereby being a legitimate subject of history. Each of these great bodies had an extraordinary founder, who spoke and acted in the face of day. Their sayings and doings were witnessed by thousands, and recorded by cotemporary historians, themselves perfectly conversant and familiar with the occurrences they relate.

"The biographers of Jesus of Nazareth, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, were pre-eminently competent and trustworthy witnesses of the facts which they have recorded of him. For years, they were his intimate friends and daily companions. They ate and drank with him at the same table, walked and conversed with him in the most familiar terms. Jesus was open and confiding, he kept nothing concealed from his disciples. Hence, they were informed of

all his views and projects, in which themselves were most deeply concerned. They consequently had every facility of becoming acquainted with those things which they have recorded of him, and therefore are most competent witnesses. They are, moreover, highly trustworthy. When they wrote, their master was no more. He had been condemned by the tribunals of his country, and executed by the decree of her people in a most ignominious manner. The greater part of his nation had rejected him. It was considered shameful and criminal to belong to his party. All his followers were threatened with death. To deny him was an infallible means of securing personal safety. His abandoned and forlorn disciples could therefore have no earthly motive in vindicating the character of their fallen master, but the impulse of conviction and the love of truth. Hence, they are not only competent, but as I have said, highly trustworthy witnesses.

“The facts which they relate are of a simple and obvious kind, easily comprehended by the meanest understanding, and ascertained by the most ordinary observation. They are narrated, moreover, in an artless and unaffected manner, which at once precludes the slightest suspicion of an interest to deceive, or of a possibility of being deceived. Here then we have four competent and trustworthy wit-

nesses, relating incidents which are entirely within the range of their comprehension and observation. If then there be truth in history, their testimony is conclusive and infallible.

“Let it be remembered that Jesus of Nazareth has proved himself to be a God, or one, acting in his name and by his authority, divinely inspired. Then whatever he promised, he must have intended, for God cannot deceive, and whatever he intended, he had the power to fulfil, for God is omnipotent.”

“Unquestionably true,” observed the Jaco, “but here lies the important point. What is it that he really has promised concerning the spiritual kingdom and the guide, that should conduct us thereto, and how has this promise been redeemed?” “You may gather all,” answered Xavier, “even to the minutest circumstance from his biographers, whose character as creditable witnesses has been established, I hope, to the satisfaction of the most fastidious critic. From them we gather, in substance, that Jesus of Nazareth was a man (if mere man he was,) powerful in word and deed. That at about the age of thirty, he announced himself as a public teacher who had come from God, clothed with extraordinary power to effect the great work of the world’s reformation. To aid him in the execution of this great task, he gathered around him a few trustworthy

friends. To these he freely communicated the great plans he had formed to accomplish the important event for which he had been sent to the earth. The principal of these plans was, to establish on earth a spiritual empire, whose boundaries should be its limits, and whose duration, its continuance.

“This, his intention, he makes known to his disciples on every public occasion, in the most solemn and formal manner. He tells them that he has come down from heaven with the avowed purpose of founding a spiritual body, which sometimes he terms kingdom, and at other times church. The following is an instance of one of these public avowals. Having publicly tested the quality of the materials, of which this body was to be composed, he solemnly declares in presence of his assembled disciples, addressing himself to the future governor of this intended spiritual empire. “Thou art Peter, that is a rock; and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” Matt. ch. xvi. v. 18. Here is the purpose of a God announced, in the clearest language.

“Now to revert to a former proposition, God must mean that which he says, for he cannot lie or deceive. And he has the power of executing his intention and assertion, since he is all-powerful. Therefore, a spiritual kingdom was to be founded on earth by

Jesus of Nazareth. It was to be founded on a rock, then, it must be firm and unshaken. The gates of hell were not to prevail against it—then it was to continue for ever unimpaired, always existing in accordance with the intention with which it was created.

“The announcement of the design of founding an empire whose duration should be eternal, when made by Jesus, was not an unexpected act, and did not take the world by surprise. It had been prepared for such an event for many centuries. The prophet Daniel had long before predicted its occurrence. Daniel was an instrument of the Most High God, and was believed by all men to speak in his name, and to act under his authority. The following are his precise words upon this subject, they explain themselves: ‘But, in the days of these kingdoms, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom, that shall never be destroyed, and his kingdom shall not be delivered up to another people, and it shall break into pieces, and shall consume all these kingdoms, and itself shall stand forever.’ Dan. chap. ii. v. 44. This prophecy concerning this future kingdom, Jesus, as we have seen, literally reiterates several centuries later. Hence the creation and establishment of the spiritual empire must have occupied the attention of the eternal council for many ages; and

hence must have been a matter of high importance both to God and man.

“The prediction of Daniel indicates even more minutely than the announcement of Jesus himself, the nature and the object of its establishment. It is, that a kingdom will be founded by God—the God of heaven will set up a kingdom. This kingdom is to last forever, which shall never be destroyed. It is, instituted for the benefit of all, hence all must enter it, since it, only, will afford safety. “It shall break into pieces, and shall consume all these kingdoms, and itself shall stand forever.” Truly so, for if it is to break into pieces, and consume all other kingdoms, it must necessarily in itself replace them until the end of time, they being passed away never again to return.

“That Jesus had come expressly to establish a kingdom on earth was the common belief of his cotemporaries, and more especially of his disciples. It was the current topic of their daily conversations, the great object of their hopes and aspirations; nay, I might add of their ambition, for they openly disputed concerning the rank they were severally to hold in the future kingdom. And the mother of two of them, with a mother’s natural desire to advance the interests of her children, even petitioned the Saviour on behalf of her sons, for the two most

distinguished places in his future kingdom. This fact, indeed, proves that the nature of his kingdom was at the time but badly understood, but it proves, also, that the persuasion of the fact of its establishment was withal firm and universal.

“To prepare the world for the organization of his kingdom; to gather the materials with which it was to be composed, and to qualify his disciples for the special stations which they were to maintain in it; formed, for three years, the sole employment of his public life, and constituted the main objects of his teachings. He denounced the then impious condition of society throughout the world; he convinced it of the existence and the wickedness of its manifold sins. He demonstrated the absolute necessity of the change and reformation, which he was about to introduce into the law, its ordinances, but more especially its practices. Gathering around him, into a kind of community, a number of faithful disciples, he became possessed of the necessary material to aid in the accomplishment of his great work. He carefully instructed them in the knowledge of the great part which they were to act in the new kingdom, and frankly acquainted them with the onerous duties attached to the fulfilment of this great trust. If the comparison be allowed, they were much after the fashion of a newly peopled territory, governed by

temporary laws, until a definite form of government, and explicit constitution could be obtained.

“The kingdom being of a spiritual kind, the Saviour did not choose to proclaim its constitution and form of government during his life on earth ; but postponed it until after his death, when he should have entered into a spiritual state of existence, the full developement of its several parts, that they might, when the time should have arrived, the better understand its nature, object and end. His death for the human race, was the last act of his mortal life. By it, like a skilful financier, he accumulated and established a never-failing source of revenue for the treasury of the new empire. His disciples knew that at the moment of his death the great work had not been accomplished and perpetuated. They expected his return from the abode of the dead. He had repeatedly told them, during his life, that three days after this should take place, he would return to them, to complete the great work which he had begun. Accordingly, on the third day, he rises from his tomb, and again stands among them, whole and unimpaired, as before his death. He ate and drank and conversed with them, in the same friendly and familiar manner as in the days gone by. But his influence and authority over them were now unlimited, for, by his resurrection from the tomb, he redeemed all the

pledges and promises which he had ever made them. Formerly, they had believed him to be a God, but now they were eye-witnesses of the fact: hence all that he uttered or performed was to them positive and infallible authority.

“ Under these circumstances, he began to instruct them in a more special and minute manner, regarding the present and the future government of the spiritual kingdom of which they were to be the earthly rulers and directors. To their supervision, the body of the great empire was to be consigned. They were to be its guardians and defenders, as well as the expounders of its charter, constitution and laws. For the proper fulfilment of these arduous labors, it was necessary that they should possess a thorough knowledge of the nature and object of the new empire, and of the powers and privileges that were to appertain to it. To effect this important object, the newly arisen Saviour devoted forty days and forty nights. And when he had accomplished this great task, he appointed Mount Olivet as a place of general rendezvous, where at a stated time his apostles were to assemble. There he is to address them for the last time on earth. There they are to receive his last will and testament. There the constitution of the new empire, and the charter defining their privileges, and enumerating their rights and duties, is to be

solemnly proclaimed. There, then, they receive their commission and appointment, which, by themselves and their successors, they are to exercise for ages. The solemn moment has now come, when the prediction, made by Daniel, centuries before, and the pledge given by Jesus to his apostles, of forming a kingdom is to be publicly redeemed. Standing now on the holy mount, in the midst of his disciples, he addresses them in this solemn strain: 'Behold, all power has been given to me, in heaven and on earth, going therefore, teach ye all nations: baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you; and behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.' Matthew, chap. xxvi. v. 18, 19. Then, lifting up his hands, he blessed them; blessed the infant church; and in the sight of her earthly guardians, ascended above them into the heavens.

"By this solemn act of Jesus of Nazareth, arisen from the dead, the promised kingdom has been established; its nature and power, duties and obligations, ends and objects, clearly and distinctly defined. The very charter he grants does itself describe the character, powers and duties of this empire. It is genuine, it is true, and intended to be that which it professes; for its author is one to whom has been

given all power in heaven and in earth. But he that has all power can accomplish all things, and thus sustain his creation, and verify his promises. He is a God, who can neither deceive, nor be deceived. He will therefore perform that which he has asserted, and nought can hinder him therefrom."

CHAPTER XVII.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GUIDE.

The Charter comprises the nature, power, privileges and duties of the spiritual kingdom—By it constituted One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, Perpetual and Infallible—The Apostles are to teach all nations, of all countries, during all time—This they fulfil by their successors—Infallibility in their corporate, not individual capacity—The Church is the universal guide of men of every time and clime—Xavier's recapitulation—Address of Justo.

“You have assured us,” said the Jaco, “that the Charter which Jesus gave to his kingdom and her spiritual princes, before ascending into heaven, contains and expresses the nature and object of the one, and the privileges and duties of the other. We feel deeply anxious that these should be explained to us.”

“Unity, holiness, catholicity and apostolicity,” replied Xavier, “are the characteristics of its nature. They are clearly contained in, and may be distinctly deduced from the Charter. Infallibility is its power, indefectibility its privilege, and teaching its duty; all of which are comprehended therein. ‘All power has been given me’—hence, he could make the charter such as he wished it to be. Now, what is its first article? ‘Go, and teach!’ By this the

duties of the kingdom are defined. Now, this supposes persons to teach, things to be taught, and people to be instructed. 'Go, and teach all nations.' Here are the teachers, and those to be taught, namely, all nations: 'Go and teach all nations, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.' Here, then, are expressly detailed those points which constitute the first part of the charter. Hence, it follows that, in nature, the teachers must be one; the things to be delivered one; and the people to be taught one. Hence, the first characteristic of the kingdom, unity. The apostles are here constituted the teachers, and they must be one, since each of them is to teach that which they all teach.

"Again: The things to be delivered are one. For though Peter teaches all things that are to be taught, and John and James do likewise, and that which they do teach is to be taught by them separately, yet than this, none is permitted to do less, nor can any do more; hence there can be no variety in the substance to be delivered. There can be neither a greater nor less quantity of substance to be delivered; hence perfect unity throughout must follow. The people to be instructed are also one, or at least to be made one thereby. The apostles are the teachers, and all nations their scholars. 'Go and

teach all nations !' And what are they to be taught ? ' All things commanded.' From the obligation of the apostles to teach, there arises a corresponding obligation on the part of the nations to listen and to learn that which they preach to them, which is ' all things commanded.' Then Europe is to hearken unto and learn all things, and so likewise are Asia, Africa and America. But if each of these divisions is to learn all things, none being omitted, then must they all acquire precisely the same knowledge, none of them being cognizant of more than are the others. Hence perfect unity must exist among the inhabitants of these four great quarters of the globe, as regards their views and conceptions of the truths of Christianity. The apostles were not instructed by their master to teach a portion of the things he had commanded to the Asiatics, and another portion to the Europeans, but all things to all nations. Nor did he command Peter to teach this doctrine, and John another different one. No. All were to teach all things commanded to all nations. Hence there is, by virtue of the great charter, perfect unity in every thing bestowed upon the kingdom.

“And now, what are the disciples to teach ? All things commanded by Jesus : hence sound religion and good morals. Jesus is the son of the God of truth and sanctity, the holy one of Israel : but the God

of truth and of sanctity could not command errors to be diffused, or bad counsels to be promulgated. Therefore the Church is necessarily holy. She can neither teach nor tolerate error or wickedness, but is bound to reprobate and condemn both.

“Then, again, the kingdom is Catholic or Universal: ‘Go and teach all nations.’ No nation is here exempted. The Greek and Barbarian, the Jew and Gentile, the inhabitants of each quarter of the globe, not only those living, but of all time to come, are all included. Therefore the kingdom is universal, embracing within the limits of its jurisdiction absolutely all peoples, all tongues and all climes, not only of this day, but of all future ages.

“It is, moreover, apostolic, since the apostles alone are to be its teachers; for to none but them is it said ‘Go and teach.’ The apostles, then, were to begin, to continue and to end the teaching.”

“I can understand,” said the Jaco, “how it is that the apostles should have begun the teaching, and that they should have continued it for some time; but how are they to end it, having long since departed from the scene of their mortal labors? Surely instruction is still going on, and yet they are no more. We know that they did not actually teach all nations, for the good reason that all nations had not as yet come into being, and many have been

discovered since their death, whilst others have sprung into existence, which were not in their time. This characteristic, therefore, of apostolicity, which you endeavor to infer from the charter, has no foundation in fact."

"And yet," answered Xavier, "the charter which Jesus gave to his kingdom, is and must forever remain true. The characteristics appertaining to it, no less than its powers and duties, must ever be such as they were when it was first bestowed, and as such must forever continue to be as long as lasts the kingdom itself. In that charter the task of teaching has been assigned to the Apostles; for to them only it is said, 'Go, and teach.' The Apostles then must teach to the end. Hence the teaching of the new kingdom is and always will be Apostolic. To them only is it said, 'teach all nations.' Every nation then of the present and future times is to be taught by an Apostle. To them alone is it said, 'teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you.' All the commands and ordinances of Jesus are then to be taught by an Apostle; and by no one else.

"From this however it does not follow, that the Apostles are to perform this duty personally. It may be done either by themselves or by their successors. The charter is given not to individuals,

but to a body; to the Apostolic College. Hence the powers, privileges and duties emanating therefrom, appertain to them not as the isolated disciples of Jesus, but as collective members of this spiritual body. As such they are one Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic. And as such they are required to teach all things unto all nations. What Peter and Paul therefore could not accomplish in their life-time, Linus and Clement did. And what these could not finish, is completed by others. The Apostolic College is always the same, though the members composing it be different and ever changing. The prerogatives are inherent in the body, not in the individual members. Peter died, and John died, but Unity, Holiness and Catholicity did not die with them, but remained with the others, ever constituting the component elements of the immortal league. In this manner were many hundreds received during the lifetime of the Apostles, becoming *ipso facto*, Apostolic teachers, since in virtue of their union with the spiritual kingdom, they were included in all the privileges granted in the Apostolic charter. The first Apostles disappeared one after the other, but the Apostleship remained. Their places were filled by others, and these in turn were succeeded, until the present day. And now they are the same body, possessing the same powers, and gifted with

the same privileges, having yet the same task to perform as had the original twelve who received the charter on Mount Olivet from the hands of Jesus."

"Your explanation is lucid and satisfactory," observed the Jaco, "nay, the proposition which you have stated concerning the Apostolic succession, is a necessary and inductive consequence of the examination of the premises already acknowledged. Are we to understand however, from this solution, that any member separating himself, or being separated from this Apostolic College, thereby loses all the powers and prerogatives conferred by Jesus upon that institution, and necessarily ceases to be a subject of the great empire established by him; or that such as have never united themselves, or been identified with this Apostolic College, have no claim to the exercise of the rights or prerogatives contained in the Charter?"

"You have formed," answered Xavier, "a true conception of the awful consequences resulting from isolation from the Apostolic College. The moment they become separated from it, they forfeit all the privileges of the charter; since they are no longer of the number of those over whom it extends. Nor can any enjoy the privileges of the same, till they shall have been incorporated within its folds. None outside this body have then the right to teach the

religion of the Saviour, for he never commanded them, saying, 'go, and teach.' They are not one, nor Holy, nor Catholic, for they acknowledge not the Charter, nor does the Church recognize them. And no one is bound, or even permitted to listen to them, since no one has vouched for the truth of their doctrine. Jesus has said to the Apostolic College only, 'behold, I am with you,' and not with such as teach independent of his institution."

"From this Apostolicity," continued Xavier, "arises that glorious feature of Perpetuity. The Apostolic College is to teach all nations, present and to come. As soon as a nation, tribe, or individual, comes into existence, that nation or individual is to be taught by the Apostolic College. Therefore, that College, with its teaching powers, must remain, so long as there are people to be taught. But as long as the world exists, new nations and new people will be entering the stage of life; hence, as a necessary consequence of the condition by which it has been established, the College must remain as long as the world itself shall last, and its duties will cease only when the youngest child of Adam, that shall appear on earth, shall have been instructed.

"Thus the first part of the Charter makes the kingdom of the Messiah, one, holy, Catholic, Apostolic and perpetual. But the great moving power, the

life and soul of the empire, the efficient principle of its action, is comprised in the concluding part of the Charter; and expressed by those memorable words, 'behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of time.' By this endowment, the whole work is stamped with the seal of infallibility, and it renders the Apostolic College pre-eminently Divine. This is the great consummation of the Divine mission, and the concluding step of the organization of the spiritual kingdom. Without it, much would have been wanting to forward the object for which it was created. With it, it stands omnipotent, for the accomplishment of all its ends and purposes. In this instance, He who speaks is an omnipotent God, 'All power is his in heaven and in earth:' He is then able fully to redeem his words, and as he can neither deceive nor be deceived, he must purpose doing, and necessarily will do, that which he has promised. Now what does he actually pledge himself to do? In the most solemn manner, he declares that he will be with his disciples, with the Apostolic College, teaching, 'all days, even till the consummation of the world.'" Such is the solemn declaration of a God, who can do all things. In the first place, he is to be with his disciples while teaching; aiding and comforting them in the execution of their arduous duty, and hence, those who receive the

Divine assistance must necessarily teach infallibly—then the disciples whom he has sent to teach all things, teach with infallible certainty. But how long is he to be with them, affording them aid and comfort? Until the consummation of the world. Then, the disciples are, in the second place, to teach at all times, till the last day of the world. They must, moreover, teach all nations. Then they must teach in all places where there are people dwelling. Again, they are to teach all nations all things whatsoever have been commanded. Then Jesus, in order that his promise may be fully redeemed, must aid them in the teaching of each and every thing provided for in the spiritual constitution. Now, whosoever teaches always in all places all things commanded, under Divine direction, and by Divine assistance, teaches necessarily with absolute infallibility; therefore the Apostolic College, the great guide we have to follow, teaches at all times, in all places, with infallible certainty, all things commanded. And for the same reasons, this Apostolic College, having God for its preceptor, can, at no time, in no place, under no circumstances, teach to any human being erroneous doctrines, or inculcate bad morals. Here then is the great infallible guide that will conduct us into the kingdom of the Messiah.

“Reason itself teaches that such a guide should be

infallible, as otherwise it would be useless to man. The guide is to instruct all nations in all things regarding their dearest interest. Then are all nations to receive its teaching, and act according to the same. For when Jesus commanded the Apostles to teach, he required the nations to hear, and receive their teaching with implicit confidence. But how could God compel me to hear and obey the teaching of one who may himself have been deceived, and consequently be deceiving others? This is a proposition inconsistent with reason, since a just God could never have exacted homage so degrading from intelligent beings. The guide, therefore, which he has directed us to follow, whose counsel we are to obey, is necessarily and absolutely infallible, and thus we can rely upon it with perfect safety.

“This infallibility, however, like the other privileges possessed by the teaching church, applies to her, not in her individual, but corporate capacity. For she received the charter of her rights, powers and privileges, from the hands of her Divine Founder,—as a body, and not as a person. Because, Jesus did not say to John personally ‘go and teach,’ and ‘behold I am with you all days,’ &c.; nor to James specially, nor to Matthew. He addressed himself to them collectively, as a body into which he had previously united them. Then as a body they

received whatever power or privileges were conferred upon them by the charter of their institution. Hence it follows that though individual members of this corporate body may at times go astray, and that if they have done so, yet the apostolic body itself can never wander from its legitimate duties. As an united conclave, the Apostolic College itself can never go astray. As a body, the teaching Church cannot instil false doctrines, or countenance bad morals, since the Almighty himself stands pledged to prevent it. As a whole, the instructing Church, the guide to the kingdom of heaven, is the immediate work of God, instituted by him to effect the most weighty ends, which could never be realized without the attribute of infallibility. Hence it becomes the affair of God himself. He must sustain the result of his own labor,—and, under no possible supposition, can he abandon it, or allow the guide instituted by himself, to lead men astray. It is true that the instruction is practically imparted by individuals; but those individuals teach, in the name and by the authority, the identical doctrine of the Apostolic College. Now, so long as they teach in this manner, they teach infallibly, since it is the teaching of the body corporate itself. But when they attempt to instruct in their own name, and in conformity with their own individual views, at that moment the

heavenly spirit is gone, and they cease to be infallible guides."

"I have now," continued Xavier, "explained to you the great charter of the kingdom established by Jesus of Nazareth. It is the invaluable guide bequeathed to man on earth, to conduct him safely into the regions of heaven. I shall briefly recapitulate its principal features, that you may the more readily perceive the divinity of its character, and thus be impelled to act in accordance with its instructions—'Go and teach all nations.' It has the privilege of teaching all nations, and teaching them all things commanded, with the same infallible success with which Jesus taught when on earth; for he says, 'behold I am with you till the consummation of the world.' And all nations are consequently bound to hear this guide with the same deference with which they would hear Jesus Christ himself were he to return to the earth. And any one refusing to hear this guide, refuses to hear his Saviour. This body is to instruct the people of all ages, and of all countries, in each and every thing connected with their spiritual welfare; and this is its duty, not for a season, but until the consummation of the world.

"Thus the whole world, at present and in the future is embraced under the jurisdiction of this Almighty institution, under this one, holy, Catholic,

Apostolic, perpetual and infallible College, or teaching ministry. This body is by far the most important that ever has, or ever will appear upon the earth. It is for this institution alone, that kingdoms and nations exist. To aid the Church in accomplishing the designs of Heaven, empires rise and fall, nations appear and disappear from the face of the world. As soon as the destiny of God's spiritual empire shall be accomplished, at that moment, the world will undoubtedly cease to be."

"Great priest of the Almighty," exclaimed Prince Justo, "your doctrine is worthy of the God of the Christians. How intelligible, how secure, how logical are the principles on which are based the dogmas which you avow and expound. Surely, if the God of Nature has designed to instruct man, this is the doctrine which our hearts and minds tell us he would have established. Heaven has undoubtedly sent you amongst us to dispel our errors, and terminate our protracted difficulties. The principles upon which the modern Christians have proposed to work, seem, even to our uncultivated minds, to consist in the advocacy of division, dissolution and destruction. The book which they hand us as a never-failing guide to eternal safety, is incomprehensible to our judgment, and the uncertainty and doubt attached to its passages are aggravated by the fact, that we

are forbidden the aid of a tutor and interpreter, and are told to trust to the promptings of common sense, when it is palpably unequal to such a task. Such a theory would necessarily cause doubt and division, and ultimate ruin even amongst the angels of God. And the heterogeneous condition of the elements of this new Christianity attest the unsoundness of the bases on which it has been wrought.

“But how beautiful and sublime the principle you hold forth to us as the basis of the Apostolic Church. How consonant with the nature of God, how conformable to the character of his operations! God is one! And this wonderful feature of unity pervades every province of the universe. One sun rules the day: one moon presides over the night: one supreme power directs and governs all the heavenly bodies! And yet the influence of that one principle is at the same time universal, extending itself to the meanest as well as to the highest objects in nature, at all times, and in all places. Such is the principle you offer as the basis of the teaching church, instructing by the authority of God. It is one, infallible and universal; hence necessarily conservative, like God its author—comprehensible alike to the acute and stolid understanding, and fully equal to the necessities of all. We have before us the sublime spectacle of men congregated together from the extremities of the

earth, differing in birth, language, education, manners, prejudices and nationality, and in other respects so widely separated as scarcely to have the semblance of a common race. Yet in their belief in the dogmas of faith, and in their conviction of the rules of practical morality, they are all sympathetically one,—firm in the persuasion of their common creed, and attesting the sincerity of their opinions by the actions of their daily lives. It is indeed a sight worthy of the great Creator. And it is but the application of the principle you have urged, the doctrine of the Almighty himself.”

CHAPTER XVIII.

CONFIRMATION OF THE CHARTER.

The Charter is confirmed on Pentecost. Inauguration of the Church. Luke's version thereof. We find it, on this occasion, to be One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, Infallible and Perpetual. All nations represented in Jerusalem, at the time of this great event. The first teaching of the Apostles. Their first converts. The first Council of the Church—a model for future ages. All subsequent Councils have acted in a similar manner. The Apostles preach the Gospel in different countries. They appoint assistants, successors and ministers of the word. Their Judicial powers exercised on other occasions.

“I REJOICE exceedingly, great Prince,” answered Xavier, “that you have so well understood, and so correctly appreciated the great institution, established by Jesus of Nazareth in behalf of the human race. But you have contemplated it only in the abstract. Let us now more closely inspect it, and view its practical working. Hitherto we have only seen the outer walls of this magnificent structure. We shall now enter its very sanctuary, and stand in the holy of holies.

“The Church was now founded. The Charter had been granted. Its powers, prerogative, and duties had been accurately defined. The Executive had been appointed. But as yet it had not gone into

operation. Like the subject of Ezechiel's vision, it was waiting, that the Spirit of God should breathe upon it. Jesus had withdrawn from his disciples. They were melancholy and sorrowful orphans; a forlorn flock, no longer gladdened by the visible presence of its shepherd. It was now time that their master should redeem his promise of sending to them that salutary and invigorating balm, the spirit of truth, which was henceforth to abide with them for ever. This he did, when the days of the Pentecost were fulfilled, in a most solemn and impressive manner.

“The Pentecost commemorated the promulgation of the ancient law on the heights of Sinai. It was a fit occasion to confirm and ratify the charter of the new law, and solemnly to inaugurate the governors of the new kingdom. This was done amid the harmonious sounds and the propitious winds of heaven. On this day Jesus of Nazareth stamped his work with the seal of his Divinity. From this hour the Church dates her birth, and begins to exercise her functions and powers. Consequently, on this day must we find her, what she was to be, what she now is, and what she shall continue to be until the termination of ages. But she must be, as we have said, One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, Infallible and Perpetual. Let us see if such she was on the day of Pentecost.

“Luke, the first historian of the Church, though not an eye-witness of the events of this sacred festival, was a cotemporary and familiar friend of eye-witnesses, and has left us a graphic account of the solemn inauguration of the ministers and of the kingdom of the Messiah, and of the immediate resulting consequences. The following are his words.

“‘And when the days of Pentecost were accomplished, they were all together in the same place, and suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a mighty wind coming, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them parted tongues as it were of fire, and it set upon every one of them; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they began to speak with divers tongues, according as the Holy Ghost gave them to speak. Now there were dwelling at Jerusalem, Jews, devout men out of every nation under heaven. And when this was noised about, the multitude came together, and were confounded in mind, because that every one heard them speak in his own tongue. And they were all amazed, and wondered, saying: behold! are not all these Galileans? And how have we heard, every man our own tongue, wherein we were born? Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Judea,

and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphilia, Egypt and the parts of Lybia about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews also and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we have heard them speak in our own tongues the wonderful works of God.'

"Here is a faithful account of the spectacle which the Church of Jesus presented, at the very moment when she sprung into active life. And you will find her at this first hour of her existence, precisely that which she now is, One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic and Infallible. And she exercises her high functions in the same manner on the first Pentecost of her being, as she does at the Pentecost of our time,—by announcing the word with authority from on high, calling upon the people to believe, to do penance, and to be baptized. And the nations answer by receiving baptism after the manner of the multitude of Jerusalem, who were first addressed by Peter.

"The Church on the first Pentecost was eminently One. They are all congregated in the same house, forming one moral body, dwelling under one roof. And this one body receives miraculously the same supernatural gifts, the same powers and privileges: for the 'fiery tongues sat on every one of them.' 'And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.' 'And they began to speak with divers tongues.'

Therefore this one undivided and indivisible body is also one as to its gifts, powers and privileges. Peter received the plenitude of the Holy Spirit, and John and James and the rest; but the plenitude of the Holy Spirit implies all power and wisdom to act, teach and rule, but since they are one corporate body, and as such have received their power and wisdom, they can act, teach and rule only in their corporate capacity. Now, if they act as a corporation, they are necessarily one in rule and government; in belief and teaching; in their aims, ends and objects. Each and all teach what they have received; but each and all have received the same things, namely, the plenitude of the Holy Spirit; therefore each and all teach the same things, and teaching all of them alike, their teaching must be one. And those who receive this teaching, receive and believe all things taught. Hence the believers also are one. Hence the great characteristic of the Church, unity of its teachers, of its teaching, and of the people taught by it. And such is actually the spectacle which the Church exhibits on the first day of Pentecost.

Luke affirms moreover that this one corporate body persevered in holy exercises, "and they were persevering in the doctrine of the Apostles and in the communion of breaking of bread, and in prayer." The

doctrine of the Apostles was holy, for they delivered the things which the Holy Spirit had inspired them, and the teachers were holy; for the Holy Spirit had filled them all;—therefore the teachers, and the things taught, and the people who persevered in this doctrine, were all holy. Besides, the breaking of bread and prayer, were eminently holy exercises; hence the second characteristic of the Church, holiness, was fully exhibited in her on the day of Pentecost.

“Her third feature, Apostolicity, was equally conspicuous. The Apostles were then confirmed in their station and office. They were the recipients of the favors, gifts and graces of the powers and privileges conferred by the Holy Spirit. They were the actors and sole regulators of the Infant Church. Hence it was emphatically Apostolic, in every sense of the word, on the memorable day of Pentecost.

“Strange as it may seem, she was even Universal in this first day of her existence, inasmuch as the nature of things could allow. Luke seems to have felt the importance of this great characteristic. Hence he has taken special pains in enumerating the nations which were at the time represented in Jerusalem; and we find that every nation of the then known world was represented individually in the holy city. The masses were attracted by the

mysterious phenomena attending the organization of the new kingdom. They gathered around the house where the Apostles tarried; Peter addressed them on the spot at the same time, and with such effect, that they exclaimed with one accord, 'What shall we do, men and brethren?' And three thousand were on that day added to the Church. These were gathered from that multitude which spoke all dialects under Heaven, and embodied people of every clime on the earth: hence the Church as exhibited on Pentecost is strictly and literally Universal.

"But in an especial manner is the Church of the Pentecost Infallible. Parted tongues sit on each of the Apostles, 'and all are filled with the Holy Ghost.' In virtue of this, they converse in all languages under Heaven, and are enabled to move the hearts of hardened sinful men. Then they act under the influence of the Holy Spirit; but whoever acts under such power, necessarily acts with infallibility, acting as they do under the guidance of infinite wisdom, which can neither deceive nor be deceived. Hence infallibility is the birthright arising from the very nature of the Church as constituted on the day of Pentecost. But whatever is inherent in her being can never be separated from her. Hence she is absolutely infallible.

"Here, then, we have the Church from the

account of Luke, literally One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic and Infallible. From these, as well as from the nature of her functions, perpetuity necessarily flows. She is to teach all nations. Then she must give instruction to the last nation that is to appear upon this earth, and to the last individual of that nation. But the last nation, and its last individual, will only appear at the end of the world; therefore will she teach until the end of the world; to do which the Church must necessarily be perpetual."

"I would now ask you," continued Xavier, "to contemplate that glorious institution, charged, commissioned and empowered to instruct mankind in the science of heavenly knowledge. There stand the twelve Apostles, filled with the Holy Spirit, in all, One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, Infallible and Perpetual body, the teachers; whilst before them present themselves all nations, in the persons of their representatives, as listeners and scholars. Before them, Peter rises, surrounded by the eleven, and lifting up his voice, he addresses the mighty multitude. He speaks to them in the name of all, for he is their acknowledged chief. How beautifully, how forcibly in this first function of the Church, is her Unity exemplified! Peter speaks, and all assent. The doctrine of Peter is the doctrine of John, and

James, and the rest. No division, no schism, no secession, no discord or opposition is whispered amongst them. Peter briefly explains to the whole multitude the plan of redemption for which Jesus came into this world: the whole economy of grace which he has established on earth; his life and death; and their result upon the human race. This the Apostle did in precisely the same manner, and by the same authority, by which we are now explaining them to you, and by which we have explained them to many thousand Japonians. You already know the results of this first teaching of the Church.

“And the course pursued by that multitude, the first disciples of the Apostles, the earliest services of the teaching church, is equally beautiful and characteristic, and serves as a just model for all future ages. With humble and docile hearts they present themselves before the Apostolic College, exclaiming with one voice, ‘What shall we do, men and brethren?’ No self-conceit, no private judgment is here thought of, or resorted to. Like meek and humble scholars, they inquire of their teachers what they shall do in order that they may be saved. With confiding hearts and liberal minds they come to learn these sublime truths, which their imperfect understandings could never unassisted have fathomed. And with corresponding simplicity and frankness, they are

informed what to do, and shown what to avoid, to obtain eternal life."

"Here," said Xavier, "you have a brief but truthful view of the practical working of the great system of eternal salvation which the God-man came down from heaven to establish. It is a method plain and simple, yet powerful and efficacious. The Apostolic Church is the exclusive guardian of this Divine establishment. It is the legislator, ruler and judge of the new kingdom. From it emanates all power and all authority. But the Apostles are aided in their ministry, by many functionaries. But they all act only by virtue of the power which they receive from this great corporation. Thus when the number of the faithful augmented, the Apostles appointed seven deacons as subordinate ministers, to aid and assist them in the performance of their duties. In like manner they appointed and ordained ministers of the word. The faithful people received them as ambassadors of the great body, and heard and obeyed them as they would have done, had they been harangued and besought by the Apostles themselves. It is in virtue of such a commission as this that myself and colleagues are here before you. We come to you in the name and by the authority of the Church founded by Jesus. We can produce before you the credentials of our appointment to this mis-

sion, and we claim of you obedience and submission to us, in the name of that Church, which has said, 'he that hears you, my ministers, hears me; and he that despises you, despises me.' "

"Here, then," continued Xavier, "you have an infallible means of ascertaining and distinguishing the true minister of God, from the intruder. If any one thus presents himself before you, demand of him his credentials. Make him prove to you that he comes in the name and by the authority of the One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, Infallible, Perpetual Church, the only authorized organ of heaven upon earth? If he presents himself in any other name, or by any other authority, receive him not, for he brings to you not the words of life, but those of death eternal.

"In a manner similar to this, did the body corporate maintain itself. When Judas went his own way from them, the Apostolic College, by virtue of that plenitude of power which they had received from him who possesses all power, chose Matthias in his place, who being incorporated with the remainder, thus became one of the twelve. And in this manner has the Apostolic College been perpetuated until the present day, and thus until the end of time will it continue to be replenished, for it is to last forever.

“Not only are the Apostles the directors and guardians of the new establishment, they are pre-eminently the judges, by whom all matters of difference and dispute are to be adjusted. Luke has left us an account of the action of the College in its judicial capacity, when for the first time it became necessary to constitute itself into a court of justice, to investigate and decide upon a controverted matter within its sphere. For even in the days of the Apostles themselves, differences of opinion arose. At the time, the point in dispute was,—the question originated by the Jewish converts, whether the converted Gentiles were not bound to submit to the law of circumcision. This the latter denied. Both parties maintained their opinions, and advanced their views with firmness and zeal; in doing which, they but exercised a right, until the court of appeal should pronounce its verdict. The whole matter was referred to the Apostolic body, in Jerusalem, the city of peace. There then did they assemble, discussing the subject in debate, and ending their deliberations by the annunciation of a solemn decree: ‘It has seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us, to lay no further burden upon you, our brethren of the Gentiles in Antioch, in Syria, and Cilicia, further than that you abstain from sacrifices offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and fornication.’ The

crime of fornication was not understood by the Gentiles, hence its place in this decree. The abstinence from blood was a temporary ordinance, to accustom the converts from Paganism to a new order of things, and to cause them to forget the old law.

“The Apostolic College authoritatively decides the matter, citing the power upon which they act, ‘It has seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us.’ The Holy Ghost then aided and assisted them in this, the first exercise of that authority which had been conferred upon them by the charter of Mount Olivet. As the Holy Ghost is pledged to remain with them forever, to guide them in all truth, he has since assisted them on similar exigencies, and must continue to do so until the end of the world.

“By this first council of the Church, she has established a judicial mode of action in the matters of faith, morals and discipline, of whatever kind or nature they may be; to which form she has faithfully adhered in all after ages. The formula adopted by the first and the last council, in deciding upon dogmas or rules of practice will be found to be substantially the same. And on the occasion related, the heated disputants had virtue enough to receive the decision with humble and silent submission. The Church speaks, and all is ended. The sentence is pronounced, and the parties meet each

other on former terms. Had this submissive wisdom of the first believers descended to after ages, there would now be but one fold and one shepherd instead of the motley crowd that follow the name of Jesus.

“This mode of procedure in matters of disputed faith and morals, adopted by the Council at Jerusalem, has been followed by the Church in all subsequent ages. The Arian heresy was thus met, examined and condemned. The Nestorians, Eutychians, Donatists, and others, were in this manner adjudged and denounced by the same authority which had pronounced sentence on the erratic Christians of the first age of the Church. And as often as new difficulties may arise in the belief or practice of the authorized religion of heaven, this same means will be the only and ultimate resort, so long as the world is in existence.

“Out of Judea, the operations of the Church were conducted in a similar way. ‘And they went forth,’ says the historian Mark, ‘preaching every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following.’ Whilst Peter taught the people of India, and Syria, and of Rome, Paul taught in lesser Asia, Greece, and as far as Spain. Andrew penetrated into Scythia; Thomas and Bartholomew into Parthia and India, and so of the rest, all instructing the nations by word of mouth,

not by tracts or Bibles. The same acts were performed by their successors, whom they selected to follow them in virtue of the charter, and after the fashion of the Council at Jerusalem. Concerning this appointment of successors, the historian Luke, says, 'they ordained them priests in every Church.' 'For this cause,' says Paul to Titus, 'I left thee in Crete, that thou should'st set in order the things that are wanting, and should'st ordain priests in every city, as I have appointed thee.' And to Timothy, he says, 'the things that thou hast heard of me amongst many witnesses, the same commit thou to those faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.'

"Now we do know from history, that these faithful men, successors of the first teachers, have actually taught by word of mouth, the Egyptians, Ethiopians, Persians, Franks, Germans, Slavonians, and likewise the people of Russia, Poland, Hungary, England, Ireland, and the new world. In a word, they have taught all nations under heaven, and are, at this very moment, engaged in the same great and glorious task, laboring with equal zeal, and with perhaps, commensurate success, as this, your own Japan, will testify on this very day.

"The judicial functions granted her ministers by the Church, are alike exercised in other and in all

places; as at Jerusalem; at Constantinople; at Nice, Ephesus, and Chalcedon; at Rome; everywhere indeed, are their proceedings summary and positive, as become the exponents of a Supreme power. And from their decisions there can be no appeal, being as they are, the acts of an authority, which can neither deceive nor be deceived, and which, as such, has ever been regarded by the Christian world."

"Here then," continued Xavier, "you have made clearly and truthfully manifest, that in which consists the secure and never-failing guide, appointed by the Almighty to direct man into the path of truth and righteousness, through which he may be conducted to the portal of the eternal kingdom of heaven. This guide was proclaimed and established by Jesus before he ascended into heaven, and God solemnly confirmed it on the day of Pentecost. This guide was adopted by the apostles, and followed by the whole Christian world for fifteen hundred years, without a dissenting voice. It is still, the one, only safe guide of the majority of those who have adopted the doctrine of the Christian dispensation.

CHAPTER XIX.

IMMUTABILITY OF THE GUIDE.

As the teaching Church was the Guide established by Jesus, none but He could change it. When did He change it? The Guide intended for all must be adapted to all. Such is not the Bible, but such is the teaching Church, which is suited to all capacities, and fit for all countries. It is the simple and natural way to learn the truth. The Church gives character to the Scriptures—hence are the Protestants obliged to follow it, in spite of themselves. She only is its guardian, and hence its expounder.

“UNDOUBTEDLY,” exclaimed the Jaco, “the guide you hold out to us, is the guide of nature. Its operations are simple, natural, direct and necessarily safe. Nature prompts the child to obey the instructions of the parent, and the scholar to improve by the instruction of the master; and in the sight of Heaven, what are we, but mere children, unable to distinguish our right hand from our left? What course more natural or more appropriate for us than to listen and to obey, the kindly governors whom our great Parent has sent us from heaven, in the person of his Church, to lead us into the ways of safety and truth? Surely, it ill becomes a child to dispute with his parent, or the scholar with his preceptor. What then is the book which they have

placed in our hands, compared with this simple, rational, and secure guide? The book might, perhaps, answer philosophers and sophists, who love to wrangle and dispute on trivial points, and to tread obscure and impracticable paths; but the sincere inquirer, the earnest lover of truth, must rejoice in following the great infallible guide which you have demonstrated unto us, and which nature prompts us to hear and obey."

"It is an admitted fact," continued Xavier, "that this guide was first established by Jesus, and exclusively adopted and followed by the whole Christian world for many centuries. Now what Jesus has established, no one has the right to change or abrogate, but himself. Now Jesus has established the Christian Church. None, therefore, but he, can alter, amend, or annul it, or substitute another in its place. If then the ancient guide has been discarded for another one, as the modern Christians contend, it remains for them to show unto us,—when Jesus of Nazareth has amended the old method of learning his revelations, and at what time he introduced the new mode, when he did revoke the solemn charge he made his disciples, 'Go and teach all nations,' commanding them instead, to distribute the Bible, in short, when he changed the first method of instructing the people for another one,—at what particular

time the change was effected—under what circumstances, in what manner, and for what cause was it introduced.

“ But I go yet further, and assert that Jesus could not have introduced the system of the Bible, inasmuch as he could not have instituted as a guide for man that which is altogether inadequate to the fulfilment of the ends and purposes for which it was designed. We have already seen that the Bible lacks many essential requisites to constitute a fair and adequate criterion, by which the principles and standard of morality may be governed. Since every class of people was to be guided into the kingdom of the Messiah, it was necessary that the guide should suit the capacities, and be adapted to the various conditions, and moreover be within the reach of all. Such is not the Bible, as we have seen, but such is, emphatically, the teaching Church. How, then could Jesus have substituted the Bible for the Church? The latter, as I have said, is suited to the capacities of all. All can listen to its instructions, and obey its admonitions, even the most ignorant of men, and that too with perfect safety. For they would listen unto those, of whom, Jesus has declared, ‘ he that hears you, hears me.’ It is adapted to the actual condition of every class of men, alike to the prince and the peasant, to the rich and the poor, to the

philosopher and the untutored savage. It acts in a like manner to all, affording them equal facilities for gaining the truth, giving preference to none, requiring every one to listen and obey. The haughty scholar, and the ignorant peasant, the master and the slave, side by side, stand the humble recipient of the truth. And the most illiterate plebeian has precisely the same security, as the most accomplished Divine, since they both bow to an authority, which can neither deceive nor be deceived. How different is your Bible? When one has perused the volume from the beginning of Genesis to the end of Revelation, he has drawn from it no more than a simple opinion, from which he will find millions to dissent, and all of them equally honest in their purpose, to discover the truth, as he. There are thousands who cannot procure the book, there are millions who cannot read it, and but few indeed can hope to understand its meaning.

“Again, the teaching Church is adequate and sufficient for the disposal of all possible cases, concerning articles of faith, and modes of practice. Whatever disputes may originate, whatever difficulties may arise amongst its members, the Church is ever present to decide upon the question, and that with infallible finality. Such decisions must be acquiesced in by all, since they are the decrees of Him who is

its founder. He is the voucher for the actions of his Church, who has said, 'Behold, I am with you all days, even to the end of the world.' And from such an opinion there can be no appeal, for it is the voice of God. But the Bible cannot thus decide. It is mute, and offers not a word of explanation or comment. Each of the contending parties speak through its interpretation. Hence there is appeal after appeal, and no court to take cognizance of, no judge to decide upon the case.

"But, on the other hand, how pleasing and lucid does the system of the teaching Church render the study of Christianity? How beautifully is it adapted to people of every stage, to the inhabitants of every clime, to the men of every age! At the moment when we have discovered the infallible guide, how do our difficulties vanish, how are our doubts dispelled? We may apply to her at any time, or in any manner, for information, on any point of religion or morality, and our answer is always ready. 'What shall we do, men and brethren?' exclaimed the converted multitude. 'Do penance, and be baptized, each and every one of you,' was the prompt reply. Differences of opinion arise concerning the doctrine of circumcision, which no private authority, or no social influence could terminate. The disputants appeal to the teaching

Church at Jerusalem. The Church decides that no further burden is to be imposed upon the Gentiles, and the dispute is ended. The solution of the problem is received with implicit faith as the tangible embodiment of the Spirit of God's will. Again, when in after times, the minds of the people were confused by the tenets of Arius, Nestorius, Eutyches, Donatus and other innovators, the faithful invariably called upon the Church for advice and instruction. The Church spoke in her general councils, and at once a course is shaped for all. In still later days, pestiferous exhalations arising from the corrupted hearts of Germany, France and England, obscure the heavens with gloom and darkness, impregnating the very atmosphere with doubt and error. Strange sounds, caused by absurd novelties, are floating in the air. The frightened and bewildered people gather around the form of their aged mother, seeking aid and consolation under her refuge. She rises in her might and wisdom, and with a single glance of her all-piercing eye, she dispels before the vision of her children the murky and darkening clouds of innovation, causing the glorious and benignant light of truth to gladden their bewildered eyes, and once more to shed its genial rays throughout their souls. And so long as the world remains, new innovators will arise to

tempt and mislead the children of God; but directly in their path will be the Church, ever ready to expose their errors, always vigilant in directing her offspring in the unfailing road to eternal felicity; for she is the truth and the life, indeed.

“A method more evident and just, more apt and practical, more safe and unerring by which the will and pleasure of the Almighty may be made known to his creatures could not be devised. As I have said, every possible matter of doubt she is ready on the instant to dispel. I am a child, and my parents teach me my catechism, containing a compendious but complete summary of faith and morals. This is the order of nature as well as of religion. I grow up; I begin to attend divine worship, and there I hear my immediate pastor explain from the pulpit the very doctrine, and inculcate the same practices, which the language of my catechism had urged. I attend other Catholic churches. I hear other pastors, perhaps bishops; perhaps the Pope himself. All these inculcate the very same articles of belief, command the same rules of practice which were urged by my own pastor. I find, moreover, that all Catholic people, with their several pastors and bishops, believe and practise precisely alike, and this holds true, not in one country, but throughout the universe. I visit Europe, Asia, Africa, and

America; I go to China, the Indies, Persia, or Egypt, to Tartary or Palestine, and I find to my great satisfaction and pleasing astonishment, that all the pastors of these various climes, peoples and tongues instruct their spiritual scholars in precisely the same doctrines; and that all their subjects hear, believe and practise that in which they are instructed. I have a taste for the acquirement of historical knowledge. I read the transactions of days gone by, and I find that the pastors of the first, second, third, fourth and after centuries of the Christian-era taught these very things, and their subjects of those days believed and practised exactly as the pastors of the present day instruct, and as the faithful of the present day believe and practise. I may, perhaps, study the Latin, Greek, or Hebrew languages. I read the original writings of the Prophets, Apostles, and Fathers of the Church, who can testify to the doctrine and worship of the times in which they lived, and I find that the Prophets have pointed out, and that the Apostles have acknowledged and followed the very guide which I follow; that the Fathers knew no other; that reading the Bible, and private interpretation was unknown in primitive times; nay, that the existence of the Bible, as it now is, was a thing unknown to thousands, even of the flower of the Christian world."

"All of which," interrupted a parson, "is no doubt very specious and plausible; but why do you monopolize to your creed, all the credit due praiseworthy and successful action? Have not we, also, our catechisms to learn, and our pastors to instruct us? Have we not, too, our holy fathers, Luther and Calvin? Their creeds and formulas are likewise precious guides to us. Many of us believe and live as good protestants, without much commerce with the Bible. The Bible is indeed a good book, but many of us have managed to get along without it. On that point, then, as well as the former ones, our Catholic brethren are not entitled to exclusive credit."

"Your confession," returned Xavier, "proves that truth will vindicate her rights, in the midst of error. You adopt as a standard, theoretically, the Bible alone, but you are compelled to acknowledge that practically, you follow the guide which has made the world Christian, and which only, can prevent it from again lapsing into the mazes of infidelity. You have your catechism, in violation of your principles, it being composed by fallible men. You have your pastors to instruct you, but they impart to your fancies, their own religious vagaries and dreams of ethic perfection. They do not even, assume to appear before you in the name of him who

said, 'go and teach all nations.' If you learn a catechism, or are disposed to listen to the teachings of men, why should you halt half-way in your course? Why not take the benefit of the full experiment, by learning a catechism emanating from the pillar and ground-work of truth, and by listening to those of whom the Saviour says, 'he that hears you, hears me, and he that despises you, despises me.' But you say that you have holy fathers to illumine your path by their shining light. Which of these do you purpose following? For the credit of your several souls, you had better ignore them all. If you wish to follow a guide, follow the great infallible one, established by Jesus and acknowledged by all the Saints of the new law."

"In the strain in which you have been indulging," said the parson, "your holy Church, your infallible Church, your guide, your only guide, forms the whole matter of your harangue; whilst the good book, the sacred volume, the revelations of God Almighty, is entirely thrown out of the question."

"I know nothing," returned Xavier, "of your good book or sacred revelations, unless the Church, 'my only guide,' testify to its character and inform me of what it consists. The priests of Egypt and of Persia, of Greece and of Rome, the Brahmins of

India and the Bonzas of Japan, all exhibit their sacred books—their Bibles, if you will. Do you respect their character or acknowledge their authority? Peter and Paul, Matthew and Luke, are indeed acknowledged authors of the sacred volume, but these were by nature fallible men. Whence have you learned that these men, always, or at any time, wrote under Divine dictation? Whence have you ascertained that their writings contain the revelations of God, either entire, or in part? No human testimony can satisfy you on this point. The books cannot testify to their own character, and the fact of their inspiration. Some extraneous authority must prove the reality of their assumption and vouch for the truth which they contain. Not even a worldly, declaratory instrument can be considered as legal authority among men, unless its character be certified by some competent, independent tribunal. What demonstration has been given you, that the book you hand me, is really the good book? Who vouches for its truthfulness and inspired character? For you, Scripture is no Scripture, because there is no infallible authority to assure you of the fact.”

“Your premises,” exclaimed the parson, “are replete with sophistry and inconsistency. Have not, you, yourself, cited Matthew, Luke and Mark, to

prove the existence, and even the infallibility of your church? Why deny me the right to do the same?"

"The truth is sometimes unpleasant," answered Xavier, "and yet it must be told. You are privileged to use the writings of Matthew, Luke and Mark, as common history, as records of the times in which they wrote, entitled to belief, as emanating from witnesses of the public facts which they relate. And as such only, have I made use of their assertions, to demonstrate the infallible nature of the Church to which I belong. I have used and extolled them, not as the embodied language of the Divine fire, but simply as ordinary records of a high character for authenticity—such as we would employ to establish, for instance, the fact of the foundation of the Japonian Empire. Here, then, must rest your objection. But I have grounds to go yet further. Having established the infallibility of the Church from human testimony, that Church itself, witnesses to the real character of these writings, which hitherto I had regarded and used as merely human records. It informs me of their divinely inspired character. It directs me to these writings, stating which are, and which are not, the impulses of the Deity, enrobed in human garb. It does for me, more than even this. It discloses to me, the hidden

meaning, the precise sense, of these mysterious writings; a result, which no human ingenuity could succeed in effecting. In this manner, my infallible guide puts me in actual possession of the good book, and teaches me how to read and to understand it, whilst to you, it is and must forever remain a sealed book, unless you apply to that great authority, the Church, that it may be opened for you."

"But what is the real nature," observed the Jaco, "of the Bible, of which we have heard so much?"

"The Bible," answered Xavier, "consists of two parts, designated the Old and the New Testament. The Old Testament is a kind of a history from the creation of the world to the coming of the Messiah. It contains a narrative of the creation and of the fall, and of its disasters upon the human race. It announces the future redemption of man. It distinctly foretells the advent, life and death of the Messiah. In a word, it is a faithful record of God's transactions with man. The New Testament is a detailed history of the coming of the Messiah, of his life and death, of the foundation of the spiritual kingdom, of his first disciples, and of matters connected with his mission on earth. It is a true narrative of the lives and acts of Jesus and the twelve Apostles, in connection with the establishment of the Christian Church.

“But it so happened, that there existed many such pretended histories, purporting to give the same facts, and yet widely differing in their detail of them. This confused the minds of the faithful, who were taught to revere the sacred writings, but who knew not which they were. The Church, then, deemed it proper, in her sovereign, infallible capacity, to determine which of the many rival books really and truly contained the revelations of God. None could determine this important fact, except her, to whom the Saviour had said, ‘behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.’ She alone, could testify to the existence, to the authenticity, and to the inspired character of the sacred writings. She then, was the sole guarantee and voucher of the Scripture as it is. Nor could she waive her right of still guarding it, after its character had been established, since none but she could faithfully discharge the duties of its censorship. The Scriptures were, in every respect her own, for she had made them known throughout the world, and had presented them to her faithful people. And since it was she who had established their character, it became her province to interpret their meaning. Without the Church, Scripture is no Scripture; with the Church, it is precisely that which she has ever stated it to be, and nothing more

nor less. - On her are we to depend for the holiness of its nature ; for her use alone must it continue to exist. She cannot part with her own property, more especially, when to those who have not her assistance, it is so susceptible of abuse."

"When and where," inquired the Jaco, "did the Church establish the sacred character of these writings?" "Three hundred and ninety-seven years from the date of her existence, the Church assembled in the third council of Carthage. Then and there she decided upon the number, quality and authenticity of the sacred books, and thus presented them to the world. St. Augustine, a critical scholar of ecclesiastical history, affirms that Pope Innocent the first, had already designated the precise writings of the Scripture, which the council of Carthage subsequently solemnly confirmed. In later times, Pope Pelagius confirmed the same canon, acting in the name of the universal church. The same was moreover done in still later days, by Pope Eugenius, acting in the same capacity.

"Until the decision of the Council of Carthage, some of the sacred writings had borne a vague and doubtful character, and could only be made use of and quoted as good books containing the historical evidence of the transactions of the time of our Lord. Since then solemn decisions have been made, we

have regarded them as the oracles of Heaven, and recognize them as the direct productions of the Creator's will. Yet even now, these oracles require explanation, these words of God need an interpretation by that only exponent of the Divine will on earth, the infallible Church. The Scriptures continue to be her property exclusively. Dissenters from her doctrine can lay no claim to them, nor can they derive from them any benefit, save that which accrues from them as mere historical records.

“We have thus far used the Scriptures in the manner of an ordinary narrative, for the purpose of establishing the existence, and determining the nature of the Supreme Church. But now that the Church has instructed us of their Divine character, the history and matter which they recount must necessarily receive the stamp of Divinity. Hence the arguments deduced from their statements are infallible, since, they rest upon the foundations of Divine testimony. Hence the entire fabric of the spiritual kingdom on earth, rests upon Divine authority. Hence the authority which it exercises is Divine and infallible in the fullest sense of the terms.”

“I have now proved, I hope to your satisfaction,” continued Xavier, “the following important facts : first, That Jesus of Nazareth did establish in the

land of Judea, a body of teachers: secondly, That to this body of teachers, he committed the task of instructing all nations in all his commandments: thirdly, That this body of teachers existed before the New Testament had been written; that they were performing their duties many years before it was completed; that several hundred years elapsed before it became universally known to the Christian world; fourthly, That this body of Christians, in order that they may fulfil the task entrusted them, must still exist, and ever so continue, so long as lasts the world: fifthly, That the charter granted to this body, constitutes it One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, Infallible and Perpetual. Hence it follows, sixthly, That the people of all nations, the inhabitants of every clime, the children of all times, are bound to become, and enroll themselves the scholars of this great College, and that the instructions which they receive from the great body of teachers must command their highest respect and obedience."

"Great Apostle," exclaimed Justo, "your words fall upon our ears like mandates from Heaven. The truth of their substance, the force of their disposition, render them irresistible to the hearts of men. The Sovereign Power himself has spoken through your lips. Your arguments have brought conviction to our minds, your persuasive appeals

have met with corresponding fervor in our souls. It is in vain for us to urge warfare against that which is for our good. We confess our confidence in, our attachment for, our belief in the One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, Infallible and Perpetual Church. Her teachings we vow to hear and to obey, and we are resolved to be guided by her counsels, and governed by her wishes."

The great majority answer, "Be it so!" The Council then adjourned for three days.



CHAPTER XX.

THE TRUE GUIDE IDENTIFIED.

The true Church is universal, from the nature of her constitution.

Universality belongs neither to the Eastern nor Protestant Churches, hence they cannot be the true guide—It is found eminently in the Church of Rome—Unity, another necessary element of the true Church, likewise characteristic of it—Again, Apostolicity, a distinguishing mark of the Divine institution, one of its most intimate parts—Possessing then these essential requisites of a guide, the Church of Rome is indeed the great earthly kingdom of the Messiah—The pretensions of others to this high honor, unfounded and untenable.

GREAT preparations were being made in the valley of Frenoxama, during the recess of the Council, for its next solemn session, at which, it was expected, the great question would be decided. It had indeed, been proved and admitted that Jesus of Nazareth had founded a kingdom upon earth, which, all were bound to enter, and whose laws and ordinances, all were required to obey. It was also admitted that he had established a guide to conduct us into that kingdom; and the character of both had been minutely described. The Prince of Japan, and many of the Council had even openly declared their belief in such a kingdom, and pledged their uncon-

ditional adherence to the requirements of its guide. Still, as yet, neither the one nor the other, had been formally identified. There were many social kingdoms, many rival guides, amongst the various Christian denominations, all contending for the honor of Orthodoxy. The object of the coming session was to terminate this protracted, though important dispute, by ascertaining the individual kingdom and guide actually established by Jesus for the purposes before named. The impending sitting, was therefore, highly momentous, not only to the members of the Council, but to all Japan, and moreover, to every nation. The palm of superiority, veracity and supremacy, was to be awarded to one denomination, and as a consequence, the others were to be pronounced false and heretical. It may then be easily understood, why the deepest interest was manifested by each individual member throughout this coming meeting. They had all to arm themselves for a fierce conflict.

On the appointed day, Nobunango and the Princes of Japan again met the religious delegates assembled from the four quarters of the globe. The eighth session was solemnly opened by the Jaco, President of the Council. "Learned and pious divines," said he, "we have arrived at the crisis of our deliberations. All points of dispute have been happily

adjusted, with the exception of one, and that one the most important of all. We are agreed upon the establishment of the kingdom of Jesus of Nazareth, and of its essential characteristics. We all acknowledge the necessity of a guide to conduct us thereto, but which of the many rivals is the kingdom, and which the genuine guide, is now the question for discussion."

Hereupon, an Armenian priest, a Greek Bishop, a Lutheran minister, and a dozen others, almost simultaneously rose to their feet, urging in the most earnest manner, and in the most vehement terms, the excellence of their several systems. One adduced the beauty of the principle of his Church, another its wealth and power, a third its high antiquity, a fourth the number and extent of its members. But none of them advanced arguments sufficiently forcible to make a serious impression upon the Council. It was altogether ex-parte pleading.—Nothing grand or comprehensive, corresponding with the nature and dignity of the theme could be detected in their remarks. There was nothing in the thread of their several discourses that would suitably comport with that sentiment which all had cherished concerning that great establishment, destined at one day to receive within its bosom all the nations of the earth. When the Doctors had

exhausted their stock of argument, and fatigued their controversial powers, all eyes were turned to Xavier, whose powerful reasoning and burning eloquence had kept the minds and hearts of the entire assembly ever busy and active during the preceding session.

"Divines," said he, "this is an important moment, important for all eternity, not for ourselves alone, but for millions unborn. We are to discuss the great, the only question that remains for our consideration. When it will be settled all will have been determined, and until then nothing can be said to have been done. I therefore solicit of all, during the course of the remarks I am about to make, that patient and impartial hearing which the importance of the subject demands of every honest man. The guide of which we are in search," continued Xavier, "may aptly be styled a band of teachers, teaching the science of heaven to men on earth, for such in reality was the Apostolic College. Now such a board consists of members and a president, associated for the purpose of performing certain duties. These duties are, as we learn from the very Charter, to 'teach all nations, all things whatsoever Jesus has commanded.' They must 'teach all nations,' then members of that board must be found in all places, in all countries, amongst all nations, and at all

times, from the beginning of Christianity until the end of the world. You have now simply to cast your eyes around the Christian world and endeavor to discover that denomination which originated with the Apostles, which spread itself throughout every clime, comprising all tribes, all people, all tongues, and which has continued to exist until the present day. Where is such a denomination to be found? Which of them is coeval with the Apostles? The Eastern denominations began with Arius, Nestorius and Eutyches. The Grecian Church was begotten by the schismatic Photius. The Lutheran sect dates its existence from Luther. The Calvinistic from Calvin. Not one of these dates back to the days of the Apostles, each of them appearing many centuries after the commencement of the Christian Era. Again, which of these denominations teaches all nations, itself existing in every land? Is it the Greek Church? No; it is confined mostly to Greece. The Lutherans and Calvinists are chiefly circumscribed within Europe, and if they have existed in any other clime or country, they have changed their tenets with their locality, constituting themselves a distinct denomination. But above all, which of all these denominations complies with that essential duty enjoined by the Charter, 'Go and teach all nations?' What nation have the Greeks

taught? What tribes have been made acquainted with the Divine truths of Christianity through the medium of the various sects of Protestantism? History, facts, answer, none,—positively none!—Distributing Bibles does not constitute fulfilment of the Messiah's instruction; it is rather an imposition upon the unsuspecting and confiding.

“The genuine board of teachers, constituted by Jesus on Mount Olivet, and confirmed on the day of Pentecost, is not then to be found amongst any of those denominations which I have enumerated.”

“Great God!” exclaimed a Parson, “for what times are we not reserved. To hear it asserted that thy Spirit has departed from the children of men; that thy Church exists not on the earth; that truth does no longer abide with us! Who can remain silent under such language? Hast thou not promised to abide with us forever? And yet is this Jesuit laboring to prove that Christianity is no longer in being, and that all creeds have proved faithless to the trust committed to them by their Divine founder. What blasphemous denial of the veracity of God!”

“Friend,” answered Xavier, “this exhibition of your zeal for the honor of God is premature. I have only asserted that the Spirit of God does not abide with the wicked, nor his truth irradiate the

erring. I have only shown that there are many who are not his, because they 'hear not his voice, nor obey his commandments.' They are not his, since they know him not. Many millions still remain who have never bent the knee to Baal, nor gone after the abominations of the Gentiles. But there is a Christian people whose fountain-head is at Rome, who have faithfully obeyed to this day the Charter of Mount Olivet, and zealously complied with every article of its injunctions. Do not then pervert my remarks to imply that the Spirit of God has forsaken all flesh. He still dwells in the midst of us.

"The identical board of teachers which was formed and commissioned on Mount Olivet and confirmed on Pentecost, is not only existing at this very day, but is discharging precisely the same functions which it began to exercise more than fifteen hundred years ago, in the City of Jerusalem. 'Their sound went forth from Jerusalem over all the earth, and their words to the extremities of the world.' 'Go and teach all nations.' 'And Peter standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice and spoke to them.' He began by teaching the house of Israel, and the innumerable strangers who were then at Jerusalem. From that first uprising, Peter and the eleven have not sitten down, nor held their peace, until this very hour. For that same Peter, and

those very eleven are at this moment speaking in Rome, and throughout the world, by their lineal and acknowledged successors. From Jerusalem they went forth into every province of the Roman Empire; into Asia, Africa and Europe. I can enumerate to you the very countries through which they travelled, and name to you the very nations which they instructed, and whose inhabitants they received into the great kingdom in every century, nay, in every year, that has elapsed, since the memorable Pentecost, until the present hour, which finds me lifting up my voice, in unison with Peter in the Vatican, to address this great assemblage, congregated from every region of the earth, and which, I may say, presents the spectacle of another Pentecost. And I call upon you, learned historians, chroniclers, geographers, you, strangers and travellers, who are here, wafted by the four winds of heaven, to designate to us that epoch, year, or day, at which this eternal board did ever suspend its teachings; to name to us that nation which it has not taught, and to point out to us that clime, in which it is not actually teaching on this very day. I pause for an answer, but you have none to give.

“Do not say, then, that I have asserted that the Spirit of God has departed from amongst us; that His truth is no more on earth, and that His Church

thereon no longer exists. No, at this very day, does it breathe, in all its celestial beauty, imperishable glory, unparalleled fruitfulness. Its earthly head is fixed amongst the Romans, and its temporal ruler is seated on the throne of the Cæsars.

“But not only is the genuine board of Mount Olivet to teach all nations, it is moreover to teach them all things commanded. ‘Go and teach all nations, teaching them all things, whatsoever I have commanded you.’ Then, the teaching of this genuine board must be strictly one and uniform in its character, as performed by all its members. Should one of them teach one article less than that which he is commanded to teach, he teaches falsely, since he teaches not all of that which is commanded. And should another teach an article that is not commanded, he, again, teaches falsely, since he teaches that for which he is not empowered. Hence, must the teaching of them all, be one, uniform and the same. I say uniform, since it must disseminate precisely the same doctrines to day, which were promulgated by them yesterday, or a thousand years ago, or which were taught by the Apostles themselves. For, should they teach to-day, differently from the substance which they taught yesterday, or from the matter taught by the board of Apostolic times, they would necessarily teach

more or less than is commanded, and in either case would teach falsely. Hence, it must be absolutely uniform, strictly one, precisely the same.

“Now, Divines, which of you is prepared to claim this glorious hierarchy, and to prove that it is yours? Arise, ye Greeks, Armenians, and all ye Bible Christians, and I will make you confess that this unity you do not possess, and that consequently, you do not constitute the genuine board. For, in the first place, I can designate to each of you, the year and the day, when your founders, Nestorius, Eutyches, Sabellius, Donatus, Luther, Calvin, and the others, began to teach, in a manner different, a matter unlike that which the Board of Olivet had taught for several hundred years. Teaching more or less than the things commanded by the great charter, and taught by the Board of Mount Olivet, you therefore stand divided from it. Besides, you teach doctrines altogether different from the things which your founders taught. Then you stand divided even from your own ancestors. Again, you teach, the one differently from the other, and thus stand divided, even amongst yourselves. The premises which I have assumed, are historical facts, hence is the conclusion, which I deduce, irrefragable. Hence disunion unparalleled, and divisions innumerable, exist among you, and therefore you can possess

not the slightest claim to be the genuine board, either in your separated or collective capacity.

“I must now request you to contemplate the admirable union of that great universal board which we have found, actually occupied in teaching all nations, and whose president dwells in the Eternal city. You find its members differing as to their time or place, in race and country, in manners, language, interests and prejudices; differing in everything except the common semblance of humanity; and yet, in faith, in aspiration, and in the practice of religion, they are as one man. The identical formula of belief, which was drawn up by the Apostles themselves at Jerusalem before they went forth into the various countries of the earth, is at this day recited, not in one place, but in every place illuminated by the sun of heaven, not in one tongue, but in every dialect spoken by the children of Adam. Nothing has been added, nothing taken away from it, during its sixteen hundred years continuance. Not one idea, as to its substance, has been changed. We have witnesses of the teaching of the Board of Olivet of every age, from the first until the present; of all nations and tongues; and we defy the world to point out to us one single instance in which the teaching of one age differs from that of another, or in which the teaching of one people, tongue, or

dialect, does not precisely correspond with the others collectively, or with each of them separately. The Arab and the Muscovite, the Gaul and the Hindoo, the Greek and the Egyptian have the same creed expounded to them which Peter and Paul expounded to the people of Judea; and all these various peoples and tongues profess and practise precisely that which the Jews and Gentiles first converted, professed and practised. Here, then, you have that real union which the Charter of Olivet requires, and which is possessed only by the great board over which Peter presides. And this union is incapable of dissolution or destruction; for when any member begins to teach differently from the standard of the board at once does his membership cease, and no longer is his doctrine vouched for by the infallible board. It becomes nought but the opinion of a fallible man. Hence can we name the very day on which the innovators of past ages ceased to be members of the board, and hence can we cite to you the innovating dogmas which severed them therefrom.

“Again, as you have seen, the genuine board is to teach the things commanded by Jesus; but Jesus, who is the holy one of Israel, the God of sanctity, must necessarily command the practice of holy things; hence the teaching of this delegated body must be holy in its character. And since the things

which the genuine instructors teach are to be received and practised by the people taught; this sacred instruction must produce fruit of a like kind, for His word cannot return to Him incapable of producing the effects for which it was spoken. Holiness, then, must be the visible feature of the kingdom instructed by the genuine board. Besides, Jesus has promised to remain forever with this body: 'Behold I am with you always until the end of the world.' But he could not be with those teaching unholy things; hence, again, must the genuine board forever teach holiness. And more than this, God, according to his own promise, as is recorded by the Evangelist Luke, was to bear public testimony to the holiness of the Church. 'And these signs shall follow them that believe in my name; they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay their hands upon the sick, and they shall recover.' 'But they going forth preached everywhere, the Lord working withal and confirming the word with signs that followed.' Hence must this board, established by Christ, be distinguished not only by holiness of doctrine, by the holiness of good works, but must be openly approved by the display of miracles, and wondrous signs, which

God must, and at times does grant in confirmation of the teaching done in his name.

“I must now ask you, which of the innumerable Christian denominations here represented, lays claim to, and truly does possess this threefold sanctity of doctrines, works and miracles. Many of you do not blush to make God the author of sin, which is blasphemy. And all of you make him faithless to his word and solemn promises: for all of you have separated from this board of Olivet, under the pretext that it has fallen into error, which is contrary to the asseveration of the living God, saying, ‘Behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.’ And you assert that you are not with them because they have gone astray, in consequence of which, you urge rebellion against that board, which is rebellion against God,—the sin of Lucifer and his wicked crew. Is this sanctity of doctrine? Be yourselves the judges. And have you sanctity of works? Many of you deem them unnecessary, and even noxious. You condemn the Evangelical counsels so highly recommended by Jesus. Not one of you so much as pretends to exhibit a Calendar of Saints. As for miracles, you all heartily despise them. Now we cannot concede to you, what you do not even claim. Hence you are destitute of holiness of doctrine, of works and of miracles: and conse-

quently, you can have no pretensions to be the genuine board of teachers, to which this threefold holiness belongs.

“Let us now turn our eyes to that great corporation, whose earthly parent is at Rome, and which is presided over by the chief of the fishermen, and we will find holiness to be the most brilliant jewel in its resplendent crown. It possesses holiness of doctrine, teaching, that though heaven and earth should pass away, the promises of Jesus will not fail. It teaches that the Church still is, and must continue to be, the pure, immaculate spouse of Jesus. It proposes to our implicit belief, the holy dogmas of the ever blessed Trinity, of the incarnation of Jesus Christ, and of the redemption of mankind consequent from his death. It teaches Salvation through the merits of Christ, the efficacy of the Sacraments, the unbloody sacrifice of the Eucharist, the indissolubility of Matrimony, and other sacred dogmas; hence, it eminently possesses holiness of doctrine.

“And this teaching has in all ages produced its abundant fruit. Open the annals of that wonderful Church, inspect the calendar of her Saints and heroes, and you will acknowledge that in her is the vision of John literally verified:—‘and behold after this I saw a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and tribes, and people, and

tongues, standing before the throne and in sight of the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and with palms in their hands, and they cried with a loud voice, saying: Salvation to our God who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb.' I now ask you, with one of the ancients,—these that are clothed in white robes, who are they? and whence came they? And I answer you, they are, as you know, the Catholic martyrs who in every age have come out of much tribulation, and in every clime of the earth have washed their robes, and have made them white in the blood of the Lamb. They are the fifty thousand virgins of the Church, of all tribes, and peoples, and tongues, who, free from defilement, chaunt day and night, even at this very time, the praises of the Lamb in every region under heaven. They are the glorious troop of confessors, who have, and who still do, praise and glorify his name before kings and princes, to the uttermost bounds of the earth. They are the holy anchorites who inhabit rocks, and caves, and deserts, filling with the praises of God, the air where before the sound of wild beasts resounded, and human voices had not been heard. In a word, they are the fifty thousand elders, ministers of the same sanctuary, offering amid praises, and homage, and incense, the unbloody sacrifice, the clean oblation, daily, from the rising to the setting of the sun,

in every clime illuminated by its rays. This glorious spectacle is exhibited nowhere, except in the great kingdom which Peter rules.

“But more especially, has the teaching of this kingdom been attested by miracles and wondrous signs, not in one age or country only, but in every age and clime, from the day of its existence to the present hour. Always have the instructions of this glorious board been ‘confirmed by signs that followed.’ The twelve began to speak in new tongues on the day of Pentecost; they healed the sick, they cast out devils, they raised the dead to life. Their successors have done the same whenever necessity required it, throughout subsequent ages. Yes, until our very day, and upon this point, I feel myself bound solemnly to insist, for the honor and glory of the God, whom I have come to announce to the Japonians, despite the violence and pain it may inflict upon my natural feeling. Yes, these wonders have been wrought even by my own unworthy hand, through the power of that God, who strengthens me. I am, indeed, the most unworthy minister of the Church of the great Messiah. I can do nothing of myself, but can do all things with the Apostle of the Gentiles, in him that strengthens me, Jesus of Nazareth. Have I not healed your sick? Have I not banished evil spirits from amongst you? Have I

not restored your dead to life in the name of Jesus? Bear testimony to the truth, candid princes and people of Japan!" "Great minister of Jesus," exclaimed an hundred voices, "these wonders we have witnessed, and bear willing testimony to the truth. All honor and glory to the mighty God who has lent you his right arm to loosen the bonds of death, and given strength to your voice to cause the withered limb to grow strong and vigorous in an instant." "Then," continued Xavier, "if you admit the fact, do not deny the consequences. The wonders which God has operated through my ministry, were wrought in confirmation of the truth of the doctrine which I have come to announce to you. But these miracles can only be performed by the power of God; therefore, the doctrine in whose confirmation they were wrought, is necessarily true, since the Almighty could not lend his power to the operation of works, confirmatory of a false doctrine. Hence is that creed which I announce to you, sustained by the authority of God himself. And this doctrine is not mine, but the doctrine of that glorious board over which Peter presides. This board, then, is also the true and genuine one, commissioned to teach all nations, all things commanded.

"Holiness, therefore, that great and glorious characteristic of the privileged board constituted

on Mount Olivet, and confirmed on the day of Pentecost, belongs exclusively to the Church over which Peter presides at Rome, and is the board instituted and commissioned by Jesus of Nazareth.

“The genuine board must also be Apostolic; for, it was said to the Apostles, ‘go and teach all nations;’ and it was with the Apostles, and with them only, that Jesus promised to remain, ‘behold I am with you all days.’ None then can be genuine teachers except those who are actually incorporated with the Apostolic Board, and who form one and the same communion with them at this very day.

“Now, we all know the year and day when each of you, like Judas, went his own way, and was thus deprived of the Apostleship. The very names which you bear show that you belong to a corporation distinct from that of the Apostolic College. You belong to the school of Arius, of Nestorius, of Eutyches, of Luther and Calvin, and others; but the Apostleship was withdrawn from Arius, and Luther, and Calvin; therefore you belong to a board, rejected by, and separate from, that genuine one, formed on Mount Olivet, of Apostles exclusively.

“There is but one denomination of Christians to whom Apostolicity rightfully belongs. They alone

can trace their origin up to the very mountain where the great corporation was formed; even into the very apartment where it was ratified by the Holy Spirit. The very same Peter, who addressed the multitude at Jerusalem, addresses this very day the multitude at Rome, by his direct successor, who inherits Peter's Apostleship from predecessors, forming one straight, uninterrupted, unbroken line, from the first to the present century. Hence, when a teacher, coming from this great spiritual communion to instruct you, is asked, 'who has sent you to us?' he may point to his immediate Bishop, who commissioned him to go and teach. And if that Bishop in turn be questioned concerning his own mission; he may direct you to the reigning Pontiff, who has commissioned him. And should the Pontiff himself be asked for his authority, he falls back on his immediate predecessor, and that predecessor on another one, and in like manner may answer all the others, until the questioner is referred to the very rock on which the edifice itself rests."

"Cannot we, in like manner," interrupted a parson, "fall back on our immediate teachers, and they on theirs, and thus on in a mode similar to that you mention?"

"Yes," observed Xavier, "you can, but you will soon stumble on, but not over, Luther or Calvin,

and thereby be thrown off the Apostolic track. Whosoever does not sow with Rome, scattereth' which will appear still more evident from a closer inspection into the nature of the great corporation or teaching faculty, and into the character of its functions."

CHAPTER XXI.

THE CHURCH OF ROME—ITS CHIEF INFALLIBLE.

The nature of the function to be performed by the Teaching Church, requires that it have a common organ, a centre of unity.—Such an infallible organ has been established in the Church founded on Mount Olivet, in the person of Peter.—The circumstances of his appointment.—The character of his office.—Its functions are actually exercised by him, and have been since the death of the Saviour, with the knowledge and consent of the whole Christian world.—Then, wherever Peter is, there do we find the true establishment founded by Jesus for the instruction of mankind.

“LET it be understood,” continued Xavier, “that I have used, and for the sake of variety, will continue to use Corporation, Board, Faculty, &c., as synonymous terms, wishing to signify by each of them the Teaching Church. Now the nature of the functions of this faculty is teaching: ‘go and teach;’ and ‘teaching all nations all things commanded:’ ‘go and teach all nations whatsoever I have commanded you.’ And this teaching is to be infallible, ‘behold I am with you all days.’ And since all nations are to be taught, this teaching must necessarily go on in various places at the same time. And since all things are to be taught to all nations, the teaching must be one and uniform.

Now the faculty cannot possibly teach collectively, in different places, at one and the same time. Then it must teach separately by its individual members in different places. And, as the teaching is invariably one and uniform, all these different members are to teach precisely the same things. The teaching is not only to be one and uniform, but moreover infallible; 'behold, I am with you all days.' But as individual members they cannot teach infallibly, for infallibility has only been granted to the faculty collectively as a body, not to its individual members. Individuals, then, to teach infallibly, must teach by the authority and the sanction of the faculty. And yet that faculty is scattered throughout the world, and is but seldom assembled together for the purpose of formally transacting business.

"From this it absolutely follows that the faculty must have a common and permanent organ of constant communication with all its members. There must be a common centre, where may meet all the members; a common heart, from which the pulsations of vitality may extend to all; a common head which may give stability and character to the whole; a common judge to settle all differences and disputes; in a word, a common father to correct, reprove and instruct, such a one among men as Jesus was amongst his disciples. And

this head, to answer all the purposes and consummate the ends and objects for which the faculty was created, must necessarily have all the power, authority and influence of the faculty itself, and must therefore be infallible. In the course of time questions of doctrine and discipline must and will arise amongst so many nations of different times and places, of different habits, interests and education. Now, to determine such questions, the whole faculty is not always expected to meet. The very nature of things forbids even the supposition. And yet these questions must be settled. Nothing then can be more natural, nothing more proper than that they should be settled by the head, the presiding officer of the faculty. But if he be required to settle disputes and terminate doubts authoritatively, he must needs be infallible. Why so? Simply because there could be not only no obligation, but not even an inducement for the disputants to appeal to a fallible judge, much less to acquiesce in his decisions. The head of the faculty then must be absolutely infallible."

"Your argument in favor of a common chief of the faculty, always ready to act in its name," exclaimed a Parson, "amounts simply to this.—There ought to be a common centre, a head of the faculty; it is necessary there should be, there-

fore this head does exist. I do not see how we can legitimately infer the existence of a thing from its mere expediency and necessity."

"God himself," answered Xavier, "is the author of the great corporation which has been established to instruct the world in the knowledge of his eternal truths, and God himself has designated certain duties to be performed by it. If then the corporation cannot perform these duties without a chief, as we have mentioned, God is solemnly bound to appoint him, otherwise he would require duties of a body, which that body is not able to perform, which would argue folly, injustice, and even cruelty in the wise Author of nature, which it is impious to suppose. But we have shown that the corporation of Olivet could not under existing circumstances have performed the functions which God had imposed upon it without such a common chief, always ready to act authoritatively in the name and by the authority of the corporation, hence God was bound to appoint such a chief the head and centre of the great institution of which we are speaking. But we have more than even this. We have positive proof that a chief has really been appointed over the corporation. And this we learn from the very same historians from whom we have ascertained the existence of the corporation itself. And not only do we learn the

fact of his appointment, but also the powers, duties and privileges which have been conceded to him for the fulfilment of the important trust which his exalted station requires him to perform."

"Amongst the twelve members forming the original Corporation as established on Mount Olivet, we find one always distinguished in some way or other, from his companions, not by his Divine Master only, but by his companions also. We find that this individual is on all occasions either the speaker, the principal actor, the recipient of some favor, or is specially marked from the rest. When Matthew enumerates the twelve, he says of him, 'the first Simon, who is called Peter.' The other Evangelists put Peter invariably in the first place, whilst they observe no fixed order with regard to the other Apostles. Why is this? Was Peter the oldest of the Apostles? No, his brother Andrew was older than he. Was he loved by the Saviour above the others? No, John was the beloved disciple, and was permitted to recline on his master's breast, whilst Peter received a severe rebuke. Was he distinguished for learning, wealth, talent, or worldly station? No, in all these attributes Matthew far outshone him. Peter was a poor, simple, ignorant fisherman. Was he the first that was called to the Apostleship? No, for his brother Andrew brought him to the Saviour.

‘We have found,’ said Andrew to Peter, ‘the Messiah.’ Why, then, is Peter always mentioned first? Why does he always occupy the most conspicuous place after his Divine master? Because he was destined to be the chief, the head of the great corporation which Jesus had come to establish.

“This appears evident, from the very first introduction which Peter had to the Saviour of the world. When Andrew brought him to Jesus, the Saviour on seeing him, said, ‘Thou shalt be called Cephas — that is a rock.’ His vicar stands before him, and Jesus changes at once his name into one expressive of the character which he is henceforth to sustain, which is, like a rock, unchanged and unchangeable.

“A little later the Saviour found himself in the midst of his Apostles, who were telling one another the opinions of the people at large concerning Jesus. He desired them to repeat to him their various accounts. Some replied, ‘they say you are John the Baptist, others that you are Elias, or one of the prophets.’ Then Jesus said, ‘And who do you say I am?’ The disciples looking at each other, knew not what to reply. Then Peter stepping forward, answered in the name of all, ‘thou art Christ, the son of the living God.’ Here, then, whilst the others were wavering, hesitating for an answer, he showed

that he had within him somewhat of the firmness of a rock, to which his name had been mysteriously changed. He firmly confessed that which was the truth. The answer is accepted by Jesus, 'Blessed art thou Simon, son of Jona, because flesh and blood have not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven. And I say unto you that thou art Peter, (a rock,) and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; and I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth shall be loosed also in heaven.' Matt. xvi., v. 17, 18, 19.

"Here the Saviour of the world expressly and emphatically declares that flesh and blood have not caused him to make this splendid declaration of his Divinity; but his Father in heaven; in other words, that it was not to Peter in his individual capacity, but in the character of head and chief of the Apostolic College, that he declared Christ to be the Son of the living God. The Saviour here solemnly confirms what he had said before, that Peter is a rock, and that upon this very rock he is to build his church, which is to be so firm, durable, and lasting, that the gates of hell can never prevail against it. Not satisfied with this emphatic declaration, and to

indicate more directly the position which he is to occupy in this new establishment, he even promises to him the keys. Now, it is a well known fact, that the holding of the keys denotes supreme authority, and in this light it is regarded, especially by the eastern nations, where the above events transpired: Therefore, has Peter been appointed the chief of the new establishment by Christ himself.

“And what is the nature of those duties which he is to discharge in the corporation of which he is the head and president? The Evangelist John defines them in distinct terms; he is to feed the lambs and sheep of Christ. When, therefore, they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, ‘Simon, son of John, lovest thou me more than these?’ He says to him, ‘Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee.’ The Saviour then says to him, ‘Feed my lambs.’ He saith to him again, ‘Simon, son of John, lovest thou me?’ He saith to him, ‘Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee.’ He saith to him, ‘Feed my lambs.’ He says to him the third time, ‘Peter, son of John, lovest thou me?’ Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time—lovest thou me. And he said to him, ‘Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee.’ And he said to him, ‘Feed my sheep.’ Peter, therefore, is not only to feed the lambs, but also the sheep. The lambs and

sheep constitute the entire flock of Christ; therefore is he to feed the entire flock,—the teachers and the taught. He is to guide and defend the flock from ravenous wolves, to lead them to wholesome pasturage, and to preserve them from poisonous weeds.

“And this office he is to fulfil, performing its functions with infallible security; so that any one following him need not be apprehensive of going astray. ‘Simon, Simon,’ said Jesus, ‘behold Satan has desired to have you, that he may sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not,—and thou being once converted, confirm thy brethren.’ Why did the Saviour pray for Peter in particular? Because, he being the head, had to confirm his brethren, the rest of the Apostles; but that he might be able to confirm them, it was necessary that he himself should be firm like a rock. Errors of individual teachers might not be attended with serious consequences, but it would be otherwise with a leader and chief, diverging from the proper pathway. Hence it was, that Jesus prayed for Peter in an especial manner, that his faith might not fail; but the prayers of Jesus are necessarily efficacious, being always heard on account of his great reverence. Therefore, the faith of Peter is the true faith, which Jesus came to found upon the earth.

“And how long is Peter to feed the lambs and

the sheep of Christ? So long as the flock itself shall exist, which is till the end of ages. He is the head of the corporation to which has been committed the task of instructing all nations in all things regarding heaven. So long, therefore, as there remains a single nation on the earth, so long must the teaching Church exist, and as long as the Church is, she must have a head, and so long as there be a flock there must be a shepherd to guide and confirm it; therefore, must Peter remain, confirming his brethren, feeding the sheep and the lambs, until the last nation shall have disappeared from the earth. But Peter has long since ceased, personally, to exist; therefore, he is, and moves, and lives, in his successors. Our Peter is the present reigning Pontiff.

“But is there any evidence to show that Peter did actually exercise the high functions of feeding the lambs and the sheep, and of confirming his brethren? During the life-time of his Divine master he had no occasion for exercising these high functions, but immediately after the death of the latter, Peter evidently took his place. Peter was the first to behold the Saviour, after he had arisen from the dead, and it was he who communicated the important fact to the other apostles, which obtained credence among them only, when Peter had attested

it. Peter was the first to preach to the Jews, and it was he who received the first converts into the church. He was the first to announce the Gospel to the Gentiles, and thus did he begin to feed the lambs. And when the traitor Judas, had forsaken them, gone his way, it was Peter who proposed the plan to fill the place of the fallen Apostle. In the first Council of Jerusalem, again, Peter is the first to speak conclusively, and give his decision on the matter in debate. The rest act upon it, and the cause is terminated. We find that Paul the Apostle of the Gentiles, comes to Jerusalem to give an account of his labors to Peter, as the chief of the glorious board. Now all these circumstances prove, that Peter was not only the acknowledged head of the rest, but that he constantly acted as such.

“Subsequently, ecclesiastical history informs us, Peter fixed his See at Antioch, and it is a very remarkable fact, and one full of mysterious import, that in the city where the Vicar of Christ first fixed his home, the followers of Christ first received their true appellation of Christians, which they have ever since continued, and ever will continue to bear. Antioch, however, was not destined to be the capital of the new kingdom, but Rome, the seat of earthly dominion, was designed to form the centre of the spiritual empire. And may we not

conjecture that the great ruler of nations raised the Eternal City to greatness, for the very reason that he designed it to become the seat of spiritual power? Peter, aware of the coming change, transferred his See from Antioch to Rome. He occupied the Capital of the Cæsars for twenty-five years, exercising the functions of his high office, after which he died the death foretold him by his master at the very time, at which he received the great commission of feeding the sheep and the lambs. He died a martyr to the faith he professed, and to the office he held. Like his Divine Master, he expired between heaven and earth, suspended on a cross. Peter, the chief of the great Corporation, died,—but the office, and the See remained. From its portal he steps into the house of death; but at the door stands another ready to take his place. No sooner had the great Apostle died as a martyr, than Linus occupied his place as the Confessor. And when this Confessor is again changed into the martyr, another is again at hand to follow in his glorious path; and thus has the succession been continued until the present day.

“It has already been admitted by this august Council that Jesus of Nazareth has founded on earth a Teaching Church, a visible infallible guide to lead men into the ways of truth. But this honor having been claimed by so many rival churches, it became

necessary, that in order the more properly to determine this important question, a precise description of the nature and characteristics of this true and genuine establishment should be given. This indispensable want I have endeavored to supply by a detailed account of the principal features of the great visible chief of the church. Providence seems to have designed and willed, that his office, his position and his characteristics should be so deeply impressed upon him, and so strongly apparent from his attributes, that it would be impossible, even for the blind, to mistake his spiritual identity. I have related these essential points as the great founder of the Church has impressed them upon his work; and we have simply to look around us in order to discover them, such as I have described them. The truth can now no longer be disguised. Incapable of denial, it can and must be openly avowed. Wherever Peter is, there is the true Church of Jesus. Peter is the rock on which is reared the mighty edifice of God's earthly mansion, and whenever or wherever that rock is not to be found, we look in vain for the memorial of man's redemption. 'Thou art Peter, that is, a rock, and upon this rock, I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.' Heaven and earth will pass away; but these words of Jesus will ever remain. This solemn asseveration of a God must be accomplished."

CHAPTER XXII.

TRUTH TRIUMPHANT.

Peter is found in no denomination, except in the Roman Catholic. It then is the true Church of the Saviour. There Peter feeds the lambs and the sheep, and confirms his brethren. The wonderful career of this spiritual monarch,—from Judea he extends his dominion over the entire globe. The fate of those who have risen against him, or separated themselves from him. The concluding address of Justo. His review of the whole. He makes a solemn profession of faith. Many princes and five hundred divines follow his example. The dying confession and prayer of Rosalia, the Empress. Council dissolved. Conclusion.

“I MUST now ask you to cast your eyes around the Christian world for the realization of the glorious establishment wherein Peter presides, confirming his brethren, feeding the sheep and the lambs. Is Peter again at Antioch, Jerusalem or Constantinople? No,—for those are fallen, desolate provinces of the great empire, which has itself departed from amongst nations. Its inhabitants are now the handmaids and slaves of the haughty followers of the prophet. Their character, faith, national spirit, have all ceased to burn. They are faded leaves and withered branches, fallen from the tree of life. There is no shepherd there to guard the erring and the abandoned flock; hence they are being devoured

by ravenous wolves. Is Peter amongst the Bible Christians? Ah, no! those hate and fear his crook and key, as rebel angels feared the sword of Michael. To Rome then, divines, to Rome, the hand of the compass of reason turns and points, no matter what oceans and seas we ride, no matter at what inclination our bark is sailing. Rome is the only harbor of safety, against the dark and fearful tempest of error and doubt. Here is the home of that great captain, who has so often directed the vessel of Christianity through the raging seas, and the angry gales, by which she has been menaced for fifteen hundred years. His is the only bark, and he the only pilot, that we may trust."

"Ah!" exclaimed a parson, "you are throwing off the mask in good earnest. Your Jesuitism is becoming fully apparent. There was no need of all these winding ways, the employment of all these tortuous arguments, to arrive at this conclusion. Why not, instead, direct us straightway to Rome?"

"The way to Rome, is indeed direct and easy," answered Xavier, "but I found you entangled in the mazes of error, from which it was not possible to extricate you, without traversing at times, a serpentine line. Why will you become choleric because I have told you the truth? Should I ask you for the rising

sun, you would point to the East. It is not your fault, however, that it rises there. So when you ask of me, the shepherd of the Saviour's flock,—I must point you to Rome. It is there that the chief of the Empire of Olivet resides. It is not I who have appointed him, or assigned him his residence. But I know that there he dwells, and who can attach blame to me, for solemnly declaring the fact? Yes! Peter is at Rome, and there has been for upwards of fifteen hundred years, exercising the high functions assigned him by his heavenly master. Fifteen hundred years have acknowledged him the chief of the Universal Church. During all that time, he has fed the lambs and sheep of Christ, and confirmed his brethren. No Bishop has been appointed without his approval; no Council has been convened without his sanction; he is not only the head, but the heart, the life and soul of the great corporation, the teaching Church. Those whom Peter has anathematized have faded like blasted leaves, and fallen from the tree; and those whom he has blessed, have bloomed and fructified like fertile olive plants, around the holy city.

“For fifteen hundred years, have the powers of earth and hell, stood in wild and stormy array against the throne of Peter. Infidelity, heresy and crime, have dashed their angry and noisy billows

again and again, against the aged rock : yet still it stands, its crest calmly surveying the elevated skies, whilst they, riven into a thousand waves, have been hurled back, their shock unfelt, their force forever prostrated. Pontiffs have been imprisoned, exiled, martyred ; but scarcely had one obtained the holy crown, when his successor stood ready to assume his duties, prepared to enter the field of trial. And what do we see in the end ? There, in his successor, sits Peter, on the everlasting rock, the acknowledged chief of two hundred millions of souls. There does he sit, feeding his millions of lambs and his thousands of sheep, and confirming his mighty progeny of brethren, guarded by kings, and by nations served ;—the true shepherd of Israel, the potent representative of Jesus upon earth. And there he will continue to rule, until the heavens shall pass away, and the earth sink back into the chaos from which it sprung. For if the prayer of a God availeth aught, then the faith of Peter cannot fail.

“ Let us view the course of this spiritual monarch, whose throne is fixed in the ancient city. We first see him as the master of a small fishing boat, floating on the Lake Genezareth. After the miraculous draught of fishes, he abandons his nets, to follow a reputed adventurer. For a time, he seems artless and bold, yet when the crisis comes, trembles

at the voice of a weak servant maid. His master returns. Then is he roused from his slumbers, and like the awaking lion, shaking off the dew-drops of repose, he gave vent to the word of truth, with a voice which shook the aged synagogue to its centre, whilst the neighboring idols tottered on their bases. He speaks the word of truth, and instantly are three thousand hearts changed. He speaks again, and five thousand respond and believe. - He addresses the Jew, and the Jew hearkens and obeys the inspired command. He speaks to the Gentile, and instantly does he betake himself to the path of Salvation. In a few years, all Palestine follows his footsteps, Syria, Egypt and Abyssinia, are incorporated into his empire. He fixes his seat at Antioch, and subdues Asia Minor, Arabia, Scythia, Parthia, and the distant Indies. The fragments of the Grecian and Persian Empires, swell and augment his dominions. From Antioch, he turns his victorious course to the cultivated West, and selects the capital of Jove, for his seat of Empire. From Rome, he sends forth his brave lieutenants, to subdue the Gauls, and Spaniards, and Germans. England and Ireland are invaded and won over to his mighty empire. A new world is discovered, and forthwith, he annexes it to his domain. In fine, there is no empire, kingdom or province, there is no

city or town, no continent or isle inhabited by men, where the rule of this mighty monarch is not felt, where his laws are not obeyed, and where his memory is not blessed. Show me another Peter like unto this, and I will ever follow his guidance, for surely he must be the anointed of heaven, to feed the lambs and sheep and to confirm his brethren.

“No hand has ever been raised against Peter’s head that has not withered and decayed. No power has attempted to resist him that has not melted like wax before the heated furnace, and disappeared from the earth. Nero began the fatal attempt, and, like the dews of heaven, his power faded; his name and memory remained but to be execrated and despised by all succeeding generations. The proud Emperors of the East next entered the field of contest against the prerogatives of Peter. Their power is blasted and their strength has departed; humbled and degraded, they serve a haughty Sultan, whilst their people are reduced to bondage of body and soul. The Huns, too, began—and ended. So the Goths essayed—and failed. The Vandals pursued their track of blood and rapine; they assailed the rock—they were vanquished, ruined and disgraced. Then the bloody Crescent arises, upheld by wild enthusiasm, borne on by fanaticism and rage; and,

backed by the strength of a hundred millions, it dashes furiously its might against the rock; vowing the destruction of the Cross and its followers. Peter prays—the Crescent flags—its followers turn pale—its soul is overawed—its spirit crushed—its power vanquished. It is compelled to sue for peace, whilst the standard of Peter blazes forth in all its pride and glory from the highest of the seven hills. Other Goths and Vandals arise, like swarms of locusts, in the bosom of the Church, and headed by a mad-dened monk, advance their mighty armies against unprotected Rome. Peter utters the word of malediction. Their heads are crazed, their counsels confounded, their plans defeated. The hand of every man of them is turned against his neighbor, whilst Peter soars in triumph over the field of battle. To his power there shall be no end; his dominion will constantly increase, and his name grow greater and greater as long as the sun and the moon irradiate our sphere.”

Xavier took his seat amid universal applause. Prince Justo then arose and addressed the Council to the following effect: “Divines, I thank you, one and all, for the deep interest you have evinced in the investigation of this most important question, which so long and properly has claimed the attention of men, and for the great service you have ren-

dered me in arriving at its happy solution. You have opened to me a new world, with new scenes, new hopes, new prospects. You have disclosed to Japan and her rulers a new and glorious destiny, of which before we were unconscious.

“I have learned from you, and I shall ever glory in professing it, that there is but one supreme God, creator and ruler of the Universe; the rewarder of virtue, the punisher of vice. Until now, this God has never been known to us or our fathers; and hence, heretofore, we and they have worshipped false gods, whose power was nought. I believe that a portion of man will survive the grave, and that rewards or punishments await it in a future world. I have been convinced that man is, in this life, bound to serve the God who created him, which conduct will secure him happiness in the world to come; and the neglect of which must consign him to never-ending punishment and God’s eternal displeasure.

“But how was I to serve this great being? I have asked it of the Priests of Japan, of China, and of the Indies, but they could not satisfy my mind in their replies. I have asked the same of the followers of the Prophet, and they answered me by prescribing for my observance foolish and unreasonable things. I could have no faith in their teaching,

feeling that a pure and uncontaminated being could not be pleased with actions proscribed by reason. I turned to the Jewish Synagogue, who satisfied me that their Jehovah had indeed declared his will and pleasure from the heights of Sinai, and that this declaration was to be law until he should speak again. It was the beginning of a more perfect end. But has he spoken again since the events of Sinai? To this question all Christendom responded in one confident voice, that God had spoken, and spoken through no less a person than his own co-eternal Son; that the law of Sinai is no longer in force; that in part it has been abrogated, and in parts perfected by his new dispensation given to us by Jesus of Nazareth, the true Son of God. To these views we cannot refuse our cordial assent, for if there be truth on earth, this fact has been demonstrated beyond the possibility of a doubt.

“But here again arose a most important question. Which of the many forms of Christianity in vogue amongst men is the true system which God approves? Which fashion of Christianity was really established by Jesus? To ascertain this important fact, we reviewed the history of Christianity with all possible care and diligence. From it we learned that Jesus of Nazareth, who performed the works of a God, assumed the character of an ambassador of

heaven, in which capacity he created a perpetual corporation, to which he committed the important task of unfolding to men the way to heaven, and whose power was to continue throughout all futurity. The province of this corporation was to teach all men, of all times, climes and countries. For this end he endowed it with especial powers and prerogatives, and assigned to it particular duties. All these are contained in the great charter which he solemnly granted it on Mount Olivet before his return to heaven. This charter we have seen was afterwards solemnly ratified in a visible manner by the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost.

“From this charter we gather the necessary attributes of this great corporation. It must be One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, Infallible and Perpetual, presided over by an authoritative chief or president. Natural reason affirms that such must be the corporation, in order that it may be enabled to fulfil the important duties with which it has been entrusted. And history assures us that such was precisely the corporation which Jesus did actually establish. Now, with this charter in hand, we have gone the round of the various Christian denominations, and by it, as a true criterion, we have adjudged them all. We have applied it to the various Eastern denominations; to the followers of Calvin and of Luther;

and we have seen and acknowledged that with none of them did it conform. Of those which we have named, as well as of a hundred others which we might name, not one can be said to combine within it these essential requisites, these cardinal qualities. In none of them is Peter found; by none is he acknowledged. None of these therefore can be the great institution founded by Jesus and recognized by God.

“But, at the moment we enter the great Catholic establishment, over which Peter presides, we recognize the genuine work of God. Her splendid characteristics are written on her very portals; her very name is an index of what she is. She began her teaching at Jerusalem more than fifteen hundred years ago by word of mouth, and by word of mouth we still find her teaching in every clime under heaven. She teaches to-day in China and Japan the very same doctrines which she taught in the days of Vespasian, in the cities of Judea. Her teaching is then one and universal. Peter who was the acknowledged head of the Apostolic College, is at this day the acknowledged head of the same college, in his successor ruling in the Vatican. And that college is the very same unchanged and unchangeable corporation which was formed on Mount Olivet by Jesus himself, it having descended to our

times by an unbroken and uninterrupted succession. It is then strictly Apostolic. In fine, it possesses each and all of the great characteristics, impressed on it in its formation by the hands of its Divine founder.

“Such being the case, my course is plain, my choice is free. Between truth and error there can be no compromise. Reason compels us to sanction, adopt, practise the truth. I see with my own eyes the great pastor of this one fold confirming his brethren to-day as he did centuries ago. I see him feeding the lambs and the sheep. Beyond this fold there is no security, there being no pastor to guard the flock. If there be no security then within the pale of this great pasturage, then indeed has all place of refuge vanished the earth. If truth dwell not here, we shall look for it elsewhere in vain. I therefore, in presence of heaven and earth, before all Japan, and this august Council, declare my sincere belief in the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church; and in this belief I solemnly vow to live and die.”

Prince Fugurundono, with the young Princes, educated with Justo; the Jaco and five hundred of the principal divines rising in a body made the same solemn profession of faith, desiring to be baptized by Xavier, whose heavenly appeals had convinced

their minds and influenced their will. The Emperor, deeply affected, was himself convinced of the divinely authenticated character of the Catholic Church, but for reasons of State he abstained for the present from making an open avowal of his opinions. Prince Fugurundono here produced a paper in the handwriting of the deceased Empress, which she had requested him to make public when the proper moment should arrive. It was now read to the Council, and produced the deepest emotion. It ran as follows:—

“Know Nobunango, my lord: know you, Justo my child; know all Japonians, my beloved friends, that Rosalia departed this life a firm and practical believer in the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, founded by Jesus of Nazareth in the land of Judea, and now spread throughout the earth, and ruled by Peter the fisherman of Galilee. That Nobunango my lord, that Justo my child, that all Japonians may finally be brought, by the aid of God Almighty, the Creator and Father of men, to the knowledge of this redeeming faith, is the dying prayer of the Empress Rosalia.”

“Great God!” exclaimed Justo, “my mother then died in the faith and communion of the blessed Church we have just found? May the great and merciful Father of the Universe be forever blessed!

Whence, O God! have we deserved this signal token of thy unbounded favor? Spirit of my departed parent! if in the realms of bliss, thou canst yet feel an interest for those once dear to thee on earth, Oh, deign to implore the Father of mercies, near whose throne thou standest, to cast a merciful eye on his ignorant, erring Japonian children: ask him to illuminate their hearts with the light of faith, that they may finally acknowledge their God and know their salvation! Oh, why should the blood of a God have flowed in vain for the benighted nations of Japan?"

The Emperor rose to thank the Council for their attendance and aid, but his feelings overcame his wishes. His emotions were infused into every heart. As if by common consent the members left the hall, and the Council was dissolved.

CONCLUSION.

To you, who with us have pursued step by step the arguments by which we have arrived at this glorious result, we have in conclusion but to express a hope, that although this feeble record cannot generate the fervent enthusiasm inspired by the eloquence of the great Apostle, yet that the conviction of the universality, the unvarying immutability, and the Divine character of the glorious Catholic Church is no less strongly impressed upon your minds than under his exposition, it was made to pervade those of the Council of Frenoxama. May we not also hope that these convictions will be the seed of a glorious harvest, that the confidence arising from a familiar knowledge of those great truths on which is based the impregnable fortress of our Holy Church, will arouse the heart and stimulate the will to the performance of those virtuous acts, to the denunciation and avoidance of those evil deeds,—a course by which the crown of immortality only may be gained.

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